The Bookman

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

MESSRS. HODDER & STOUGHTON'S "JUST-SO STORIES" PAINTING BOOKS COMPETITIONS.

The following are the awards made in these Competitions :—

Class I.

For children between 10 *and* 12 *years of age.*

For the best paintings in Two Books, the Prize of £5 5s. is awarded to Sylvia Waterfall (age 11), of Sparken Hill, Worksop.

For the best painting in One Book, the Prize of £3 3s. is awarded to Jean Kirk (age 12), of 123, Promenade, Bridlington.

A Prize of £1 1s. is awarded to Kitty Kirk (age 10), of 123, Promenade, Bridlington.

Class II.

For children between 8 *and* 10 *years of age.*

For the best paintings in Three Books, the Prize of £6 6s. is awarded to Gerald Crozier (age 7), of The New City, near Bognor.

For the best painting in One Book, the Prize of £2 2s. is awarded to Janet Waterfall (age 9), of Sparken Hill, Worksop, Notts.

A Prize of £1 1s. is awarded to David Macdonald Paton (age 9½), of Trantlbeg, Worley Road, St. Albans.

A Prize of 15s. is awarded to Kenneth Towle (age 7½), of Glenn Road, Oadby, Leicester.

Every age has been agitated about "new" poetry of some sort. There have always been rebellious poets who, because they could not use the accepted technique effectively, or felt the time had come for a change, have broken the old laws of verse and tried to introduce others, or to do without any. Their vagaries have roused the wrath of the orthodox, but they have never really done any harm; sometimes they have done good by suggesting an innovation that was ineffectual in their hands but

has been adapted and developed successfully by men of more authentic if less unaccommodating genius. The curious thing is that (Whitman excepted) these iconoclasts have never proved themselves great poets. They have made a noise; provoked excitement and discussion; posed for a while as something extraordinary, and then dwindled out of notice in a quite ordinary manner.

Mr. Thomas Seccombe.
From a drawing, made in Canada, by Mr. Allan Barr. Lent by Mr. Roger Ingpen.
Mr. Thomas Seccombe, one of the BOOKMAN's oldest contributors, is now in Canada, Professor of English Literature at Kingston University.

In the early days of the seventeenth century the chief of the "new" poets bent on upsetting the existing order of verse was Gabriel Harvey. He poured scorn on the use of rhyme and preached the superiority of the Latin hexameter over all English metres. His own hexameters did not justify his doctrine, but that did not prevent the law-abiding from wanting to denounce it, and the latest addition to the "World's Classics" series ("English Critical Essays: 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries." Selected and edited by Edmund D. Jones. 2s. Humphrey Milford) includes Samuel Daniel's "A Defence of Rhyme," which was, I believe, directly aimed at the intractable Harvey. Daniel was not opposed to progress; but since the poet writes to be understood and to give pleasure, he had the common sense to see that poetry is more likely to achieve those objects if it conforms to harmonious and adequate modes of expression that custom and tradition have familiarised than if the poet fantastically devotes himself to finding, not new things to say, but new ways of saying old things. That is all Gabriel Harvey was doing, and, writes Daniel, "when he hath all done, he hath but found other clothes to the same body, and peradventure not so fitting as the former. . . . As good still to use rhyme and a little reason as neither rhyme nor reason."

There is more in the same essay that applies as neatly to certain of our "new" poets as it did to certain of his. But the best summary of his literary faith is in the passage where, having protested against taking pride in verbal extravagances, and the folly of exaggerating the importance of superficial variations of form, he goes to the heart of the matter with, "Suffer then the world to enjoy that which it knows, and what it likes: seeing that whatsoever force of words doth move delight and sway the affections of men, in what Scythian sort soever it be disposed or uttered, that is true number, measure, eloquence, and the perfection of speech." Which, after all, opens the door to every conceivable literary mode, and does not reject the new poetry so long as it can answer to that touchstone and give pleasure, not merely to a self-centred clique, but to the general heart of man. Our new poets seem to think their eccentricities can do that. But Gabriel Harvey thought the same about his, and posterity has preferred Daniel.

Younger writers (and some who are not so young) may get profit as well as pleasure from a reading of Vernon Lee's "The Handling of Words" (8s. 6d.; John Lane). They will find shrewd and useful hints in the chapters on Style, on Literary Construction, on "Can Writing be Taught?" and "What Writers Might Learn"; and that Vernon Lee has written so many books herself, and written them so ably, gives weight to her opinions on these matters. In one chapter she studies acutely the handling of words by Meredith, Kipling, Stevenson, Hardy, Henry James and Maurice Hewlett, and in another certain qualities in the writing of De Quincey, Landor and Carlyle. Her views on "Aesthetics of the Novel" and "The Nature of the Writer" raise debatable questions. She is convinced that the great writer must himself be a great man, and that he must be endowed with "sensitiveness, passion, activities, and experience far surpassing that of other men"; but she rightly adds that experience is really "an inner phenomenon." Those who have lived most and longest, as she says, often accumulate very little experience—they remember nothing. "To be more interested in the world, unselfishly, platonically, passionately; to understand more, and more quickly; to feel things into their farthest ramifications, this is, indeed, the characteristic of the great writer, but 'tis his human superiority, believe me, not his literary talent." She is no believer in art for art's sake, and finds in Swinburne, Baudelaire, d'Annunzio, and others "the wearisome hollowness of magnificent artists in words." The

Miss Mazo de la Roche,
whose new book, "Explorers of the Dawn," is published by Messrs. Cassell.

greatest, "Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Browning, are all philosophers of life." And she suggests that the great author is never a poseur.

That, perhaps, is not so certain. The world, at all events, does not recognise the great author so readily when he is not. In his brilliant and often soundly critical "First Essays on Literature" (12s. 6d.; Collins) Mr. Edward Shanks is sometimes a little condescending toward H. G. Wells. Our younger critics have a way of falling into that attitude. And I think Wells brings it on himself by being a very natural, unassuming, sociable, thoroughly human personality. If he practised a portentous aloofness of manner, were pontifical, unapproachable, forbidding, after the Carlyle fashion, many would more easily realise that his place is with the greatest men of our time. We laugh at the dignified and pompous person, but his self-assertions influence even the wisest of us in our immediate judgment of him. Mr. Shanks may to some extent be right in thinking that Mr. Wells's future reputation will "resemble very closely one of those eighteenth century reputations which have not many books to show in justification of themselves. Mr. Wells will seem to have been a great figure in the intellectual life of his time; but his books will be ruthlessly winnowed." He selects for possible survival "The Island of Doctor Moreau," "The Food of the Gods," "The Invisible Man," and "perhaps," "The Time Machine," "Tono-Bungay" and "Mr. Polly," and "possibly," all the short stories in "The Country of the Blind." To these most of us would add, at least, "Kipps" and "The New Machiavelli," and possibly "The Outline of History," and if any other living author arrives in the next century with ten of his books still alive he will be lucky.

Mr. Shanks is at his best, I think, in his essays on Walter de la Mare, Barbellion, Samuel Butler, "Keats and his Critics," in his admirable character study of Goethe, and his "Reflections on the English Novel." All who are growing weary of the fussy pretentiousness of the psychological and psycho-analytical novelist will hope he is right in feeling that "the narrative gift, the faculty of telling a story, is taking with renewed importance its place in the development of the novel." And he says an obviously true thing when he adds that "the inability of a novelist to invent or manage a plot is rather like the inability of a musician to invent a tune. It may be compatible with many great qualities, even with greatness in the absolute sense, but it is a sign of a certain elementary deficiency." From which standpoint he compares Gilbert Cannan and Ethel M. Dell and awards the palm to Miss Dell. Whether you agree with him or not, Mr. Shanks is a suggestive and a stimulating critic; he is always interesting, and his opinions are his own.

Miss Honoré Willsie,
whose new novel, "Judith of the Godless Valley," Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton are publishing.

Addington Symonds was a critic of a different, a more academic order, but you read the "Letters and Papers of John Addington Symonds" (12s.; John Murray), collected and edited by Horatio F. Brown, less for what he has to say of his own and other books than for his wonderfully vivid personal sketches of people he had known. I know of no more graphically realistic portraits of Tennyson and of Gladstone than those in his earlier pages. He met Stevenson at Davos and found him "really clever, and curious in matters of style," but says in a later letter, "I have apprehensions about his power of intellectual last. The more I see of him, the less I find of solid mental stuff. He wants years of study in tough subjects. After all a University education has some merits. One feels the want of it in men like him." Whether years of study in tough subjects might not have done Stevenson more harm than good is open to argument. Symonds did not greatly like "Virginibus Puerisque," and owns "It is always to me a little forced and flashy"; but before long he says, "He is very nice. I get to like him more"; and when, a few months later, Stevenson eulogised some sonnets of his he valued the praise and was immensely pleased, which was only natural. He has excellent things to say of Walt Whitman, of Clough, and many another, and there is no hesitation in his enthusiasm for Kipling—"a very extraordinary young man. I wish I could have got to know him well. It seems to me that he is going to make a name in England. The

Calvé.
From "My Life," by Madame Calvé, which Messrs. Appleton are publishing.

Savile Club was all on the *qui vive* about him, when I lunched there with Gosse. Rider Haggard appeared really aggrieved at a man with a double-barrelled name, odder than his own, coming up. Literally." Nothing but lack of space enables one to resist the temptation to quote copiously. The book is alive with interest, and adds appreciably to our knowledge of many authors of to-day and yesterday.

Mr. Maurice Drake.

Mr. Maurice Drake, whose new novel, "The Doom Window," Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton are publishing, is a distinguished designer of stained glass and an expert on antiques, as well as a novelist. His knowledge of the former art may be said to be hereditary, as he represents the fourth generation of a famous glass-painting family in Exeter, dating back over a century. He and his ancestors have specialised in mediæval stained glass, and Mr. Maurice Drake is an adviser at South Kensington. His history of the art of glass painting is a standard work, and he is well known as a lecturer on this subject here, in America and on the Continent. He became a novelist from the sheer love of writing, and his first book, "The Salving of a Derelict," carried off the *Daily Mail* prize for a best first novel. The best known of his other stories are "WO²" and "Wrack." "The Doom Window," which treats of the ways and wiles of dealers in sham antiques, has a strong and original plot and is Mr. Drake's first novel since the war, in which he served from 1914 onward.

"The Man Who Lived Alone," by Miss Almey St. John Adcock, to be published this spring by Messrs. Jarrold, is a novel of modern life which tells the story of a strange deception.

Messrs. Brentano are publishing early this month "The Fool," by Channing Pollock—the story of a man who tried to live a Christlike life. "The Fool" has been produced on the stage in America, where it has been the greatest theatrical success of recent years.

Photo by Ideal Studio. **Rev. Herbert Brown,**

whose new book on bees and bee-keeping, "A Bee Melody," will be published this month by Mr. Andrew Melrose.

M. Victor Margueritte, whose "La Garconne" led to his expulsion from the French Academy last year, collaborated with his brother Paul in writing "Poum," a charming study of child-life—the story of his own childhood—an illustrated edition of which is published by Messrs. A. M. Philpot. The same firm is shortly publishing a translation by Mr. Hugh Burnaby of "La Garconne" under the title of "The Bachelor Girl."

Not a few critics have named "Search," by Margaret Rivers Larminie (Mrs. R. C. Tragett), as the best first novel published last year, and her new book, "Echo" (7s. 6d.; Chatto & Windus), is an arresting story and clever enough to have won the same praise if it had appeared last year instead of the other. Mrs. Tragett, who began writing very early in life, was born near Kingston, Jamaica. Her father, Colonel Larminie, R.E., was an Irishman; her mother's father was the first Sir Frederick Pollock, Chief Baron of the Exchequer Court. While she was spending two years of her childhood at Heidelberg she started to write stories, and at the age of ten won the prize in a *Little Folks* short story competition. Seven years later she had what she counts as her first real short story accepted by the *Girl's Own Paper*. In the next ten years she had stories published in various magazines and made one or two attempts at a novel, but never got far with them. The plot of "Echo" is one she twice tried to handle without success. For some years after her marriage, in 1911, she wrote practically nothing, but in the early days of the war she collaborated with her sister, Vera Larminie, in a small book of poems that was published in January, 1918, by Mr. Basil Blackwell, of Oxford, in his "Adventurers All" series of unknown authors, most of the verses in the book being by her sister. She continued writing poems, a few of which appeared in the *New Witness*, *Nation* and *Country Life*, until the autumn of 1920, then stopped writing and began to think her talents in that direction had dried up altogether. But at the beginning of 1921 she found herself turning

Photo by E.IO. Hoppé. **Margaret Rivers Larminie (Mrs. Tragett).**

to prose again and wanting to write a novel.

"I have very little inventive imagination," says Mrs. Tragett, "and plots have always been my stumbling-block. But one morning, lying in bed, I began, with unexpected suddenness, trying to invent a situation which should occupy, in action, hardly more than one day, so that my invention need not be too much taxed for incident. I pictured a birth, a marriage, and a death all taking place under the same roof on the same day, and wondered what series of events could lead up to this finale. That day I sat down to write 'Search,' beginning with the birth and not intending to have the long retrospect I eventually found necessary." She discussed the story with a friend, who made helpful suggestions, and worked hard at it for three months, writing chiefly in bed at night, for she was then engaged in an office, as secretary to a school of music, from 11 to 8 daily. Finding it impossible to continue working at this rate, she gave up the office and, after a short holiday, revised and retyped "Search," which had occupied five months in all. The first publisher to whom it was offered rejected it, but the second, Messrs. Chatto & Windus, accepted it at once and published it in January last year. She then, with interruptions (for she was busy playing Badminton and editing the *Badminton Gazette*), turned again to the writing of "Echo," which was duly finished six months ago. Long before she succeeded as a novelist Mrs. Tragett was famous as a Badminton player, holding the Ladies' Singles Championship in 1911 and 1912; she also won the Mixed Doubles Championship in 1911, with Sir G. A. Thomas, the Chess Champion, and is the present holder, with Miss Hogarth, of the Ladies' Doubles Championship. These are "All England" titles; and she has been and is the holder of many other championships. She has latterly given up tennis, but is still a keen golfer, and has all her life been devoted to music, "which I regard," she says, "as the highest form of artistic creation."

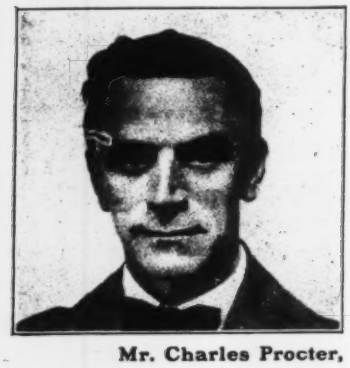
Miss A. R. Weekes.

A novel by Ianthe Jerrold, "Young Richard Mast," will be published this spring by Mr. Leonard Parsons. It tells the story of Richard's career from boyhood to middle age, and of his marriage to an unusual type of girl whose temperament clashes disturbingly with his own.

The author of "Clair de Lune," which was recently published anonymously by Messrs. Constable, and appeared in America over the signature of John Anthony, is Miss A. R. Weekes. She has several good novels to her name, the most successful being "Clair de Lune" and "Jenny Essenden." Miss Weekes was born in the shadow of Rochester Cathedral, and brought up in a Kentish vicarage. After her father died she took her London M.A. and went to Cambridge as a teacher in one of the oldest and best of the Correspondence Colleges, where she remained till 1921, teaching English Literature to pupils of all sorts, from a Lieutenant-Colonel to a Gold Coast nigger. "We were hard up at first," she confesses, "and I lived on £1 a week. By way of a treat I used to go to the gallery of the New Theatre—I think it was 5d. then—or to a 1s. seat at the Guildhall when Mark Hambourg came to play. But in our family, whenever we had any money, which was not often, we went abroad. What good times we had in our third-class journeys and 4-franc inns! And from a holiday at Lustin on the Meuse in 1890 to one at Majorca and Montserrat in 1922 it is our proud boast that we managed without a guide."

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. R. Ellis Roberts,**

whose brilliant book of short stories, "The Other End" (Cecil Palmer), is reviewed in this Number.



Mr. Charles Procter,

whose new novel, "Pools of the Past" (Bale, Sons & Danielsson), is reviewed in this Number.

Starting her literary career at the age of six, with an ode to a new carpet, "I was about twenty," says Miss Weekes, "when I collaborated with my sister (who has now published more novels than I have) and another girl in a tale called 'Prisoners of War,'" and when her father asked scornfully if they ever expected to make money by their writings they were able to produce twenty pounds as the proceeds from this. After that partnership was dissolved, she wrote "Yarborough the Premier," "Faith Unfaithful," and, with her sister, "The Tragic Prince," which is now being reissued in America as "The City of Lilies"; then came a break when she was busy teaching, until all her pupils went to the war and left her free to write "Jenny Essenden."

In "Celebrities: Little Stories About Famous Folk," which Messrs. Hutchinson are publishing, Mr. Coulson Kernahan has gathered his reminiscences of famous men, including King Edward, Lord Roberts, Tennyson, Swinburne, Austin Dobson, Stephen Phillips, Barrie, Mark Twain, Oscar Wilde, Meredith and many another.

By the way, I see Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith has recently paid tribute to Mr. Coulson Kernahan's "Six Famous Living Poets" (Thornton Butterworth) as a book that "fulfils ideally the twofold purpose of making the reader well acquainted with the work of some of our best contemporary poets, and at the same time of stimulating him to seek a closer knowledge of their poetry. As demonstrator, he does the reader the service of quoting generously; as critic he is attentive both to the letter and to the spirit—conveying those subtle mannerisms and minutiæ which contribute to the general effect, and at the same time he never loses sight of the poet's vision and the inspiration of his song. Students of modern poetry have every reason to be grateful to Mr. Kernahan for this book."

Mr. Andrew Melrose is publishing immediately, as the first volume in his "New Novel Library," "The Incoming Tide," by Janet Maitland, wife of the well-known actor, Mr. Lauderdale Maitland, and herself well known as a film actress.

Every now and then a book comes out with a title that has been used before. More often the author discovers in time that his title is second-hand and alters it before the book is printed. This has happened with a new novel by Sydney A. Moseley, which Mr. Stanley Paul is shortly publishing. At the eleventh hour it has been renamed "Love's Ordeal."

Miss Dorothy Cosens,

whose new novel, "Whose Law?" Mr. Andrew Melrose is publishing this month.

John Gay's good luck was proverbial in his life, and it has not deserted his memory. "The Beggar's Opera" seemed to have finished its stage career and Gay had settled down among the more or less obscure minor poets of two centuries ago, when its revival brought him back into roaring popularity. Now "The Beggar's Opera" is running at one London theatre and its sequel, "Polly," at another; new editions of both have been published—"Polly," as adapted for the present production by Clifford Bax (2s. 6d.; Chapman & Hall), and Mr. Daniel O'Connor, who last year gave us a sumptuous edition of "Trivia," has just published an equally sumptuous edition of Gay's famous opera, edited with an admirable introduction by Oswald Doughty (£2 2s.) and illustrated with a facsimile of the old title page, nearly thirty other facsimiles, contemporary prints of scenes and characters, and portraits. A most interesting and beautifully produced edition and one that not only collectors but all good book-lovers will know how to value.

As many, misled by its title, have mistakenly assumed that "Ermytage and the Curate," by A. M. Cogswell (7s. 6d.; Edward Arnold), is a sort of farcical story, it should perhaps be said emphatically that it is a poignant, realistic narrative of personal experiences at the Labour base in Boulogne. Mr. Wells has described it as "one of the best rank-and-file stories about the realities of the war I have ever come upon," and that, and not the title, is its true description.

We are asked to say that the National Book Trade Provident Society is appealing to the public in general, and in particular to authors and others concerned in the production and distribution of books, for funds to help them in their beneficent work for the aged or necessitous, and for the widows and children of deceased members. The Society, of which Mr. W. M. Meredith is President, hopes to raise a special fund of £10,000. THE BOOKMAN.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Zion," by D. L. Adler (6s.; Jarrolds), is a story of the Jewish return to Palestine. David Brentano, a young Jew, an idealist, with a strong sense of racial affinities, is keen to go back to the land of his fathers and recreate their ancient nation. Ethel Cohen, the girl he loves, has become too Englished to have any such leanings; she, like himself, works in a London office and, unlike himself, prefers to remain there. But after a while he succeeds in inspiring her with something of his own enthusiasm. They marry and go out to Palestine together. His passionate desire to realise his dream increases; hers wanes. She is disillusioned; detests most of the Jews with whom she comes in contact, finds life in somewhat primitive surroundings unendurable, yearns for London and its social amenities, and determines at all costs to go back. The struggle between their wills and temperaments is very cleverly portrayed; her love is not strong enough for self-sacrifice, and great as his love is for her, his sense of duty to his own people will not let him return to England with her and desert them. It is a strong and poignant story; ably written, and the characters well and convincingly drawn. The end is the only end possible, but the reader feels there must be another story; for two such intensely human persons as David and his wife, it could not finish for good as it does here.

Mr. Thomas Lyell's "Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia" (7s. 6d.; Philpot) is not only of real importance in its bearings upon the question of whether the British occupation of that country should be continued—it is intensely interesting, apart from political considerations, as a sympathetic study of the people, their religion, traditions, habits and customs. Mr. Lyell was political officer in one of the Holy Cities, and District Magistrate at Bagdad. His pictures of native life and character are extraordinarily vivid, and he exemplifies native virtues and vices in some capital anecdotes. It is a book of broad-minded and impartial views, no less entertaining than it is historically valuable.

Mr. W. Kean Seymour has followed up his 1919 Miscellany with "A Miscellany of Poetry: 1920–21" (6s.; London: J. G. Wilson), and is to be congratulated on having gathered from the publications of two years so good a harvest as the hundred and more poems by sixty-two poets that make up his new anthology. It might, it is true, have been a little smaller without losing any of its riches, but, to mix the metaphor, what are a few lame ducks among so many true singers? There are things here by Lascelles Abercrombie, A. E., Gerald Gould, Martin Armstrong, Sylvia Lynd, Edmund Blunden, Muriel Stuart, Francis Brett-Young, R. L. Mégroz, Alice Meynell, and others, that would make any such collection memorable. The wonder is not that there should here and there be quacks instead of full-throated singing, but that two years should yield so much that was so well worth garnering.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

ALDOUS HUXLEY.

A VERY long, very slim young man in a blue ulster, a pallid young man with black, rather literary hat and black, rather unruly hair, his delicate Puckish features crinkled into a smile, bent in admiration before a pantomime poster. The lady who was going to be Robinson Crusoe at the Something Empire was clearly charming enough, in her chic little cuirass of white pussy-cat fur, ears tucked under a pussy-cat bonnet behind blobs of golden kiss-curl, to arrest Mr. Aldous Huxley on his way to lunch down Chancery Lane.

He excused himself. "I love that kind of dramatic performance. More perhaps than any other." For one so young he had seen so many. It used to be, before it became quite insupportable, his job. That and art, and literary and music criticism, which were jollier, and though exhausting enough not quite so wearing. These latter things engage him still, for even artists in their twenties have to keep a pot boiling somewhere, and there are worse ways of doing that than by the jolly though exhausting task of examining the artistic products of others.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Aldous Huxley.**

For the Aldous Huxley who signs some of the oddest poems in *Wheels* is not the dilettante trickster that some of his colleagues thereupon, male and female, may be suspected of being, but a serious person supporting a family upon the profits of literature. One suspected his seriousness even when he was younger than he is now. We were accustomed to mild galvanic shocks from Miss Sitwell's coterie, but here was a freebooter of verse who had something more serious than snap-crackers in his locker. I think the first thing that impressed me with that fact was "Frascati's":

"Bubble-breasted swells the dome
Of this my spiritual home,
From whose nave the chandelier
Schaffhausen frozen, tumbles sheer.
We in the round balcony sit,
Lean o'er and look into the pit,
Where feed the human bears beneath
Champing with their gilded teeth.
What negroid holiday makes free
With such priapic revelry?
What songs? What gongs? What nameless rites?
What gods like wooden stalagmites?
What steam of blood or kidney pie?
What blasts of Bantu melody?
Ragtime . . . but when the wearied band
Swoons to a waltz, I take her hand,
And there we sit in blissful calm
Quietly sweating, palm to palm."

There you are. It seems quite impossible to remain shocked, looking straight down one's nose. You may not like it, but you cannot affirm that this particular trifle is negligible. If you want to repeat the treatment you can extract the same stimulus, only more so, from "Jonah," which fantastic fragment follows the uneven but often very beautiful "Leda" in the book of verses under that title (Chatto & Windus, 1920), or from "Minoan Porcelain."

"Her eyes of bright unwinking glaze,"

which figured first in "Eupompus gave Splendour to Art by Numbers," itself in my judgment one of the not particularly worthy items in "Limbo," Mr. Huxley's first real book, opening with the long, strange, rambling "Richard Greenow" which declines from the brilliant and delicious absurdities of Mrs. Cravister and others (promise here of the rare flavour of the later "Crome Yellow") to a rather perplexing tedium in which Mr. Huxley yet contrives to throw lights from a new and thought-compelling angle of criticism upon the over-threshed problem of the conscientious objector.

"Happy Families" seems to me the only other thing in "Limbo" that matters very much. The art that shines in this diabolically clever dialogue is more French than English, but it is Mr. Huxley's own, his boyish predilection for the work of such poets, read widely in youth, as Larforgue and Rimbaud notwithstanding. It is particularly interesting to gather from its author that he has now on the way a whole volume of such dialogues in which his own critical theories, literary and otherwise, are to be embodied.

"Leda" and certain earlier poems garnered into a booklet, "The Defeat of Youth" (Blackwell, 1918), had been good enough and sufficiently individual to justify the crystallising of a small but ardent cult of Huxley devotees. But they were mostly of his own place, which was Oxford, and generation, which was that of the practically unfledged. It was "Limbo" that satisfied the established critics that Mr. Huxley was a person to be taken seriously, and that judgment "Crome Yellow" more than confirmed. This delightful piece of rococo burlesque is probably as near being a novel as Mr. Huxley is ever likely to get, and made for him, as no book of verses would or could have done, that kind of reputation which is more estimable than a best-seller's, but is yet not without its own material concomitants, spelled in this instance by a progressive vogue among first edition mongers and an encouraging stir of interest in America.

"Crome Yellow" has that much-to-be desired quality in a work of fiction which is only comparable to the bouquet of an old wine or the aroma of a super-excellent cigar, a special savour only to be discerned by the cultivated literary palate. Caviare, no doubt, to the general, and bound to be wasted on the groundlings, who are either chilled or repelled. Certainly it boasts excrescences which one could bear to see whittled away, a certain rather wanton habit of coarseness that is not always comic enough in its implications to justify itself. One rather hopes that Mr. Huxley may grow out of this, as of his bondage to certain words of which the assonance or some other peculiar virtue bewitched him at the first discovery, and which stick thereafter to the fabric of his writing like burrs—"quotidian" for one, which is all very well for a time but palls after the second or third introduction. For Mr. Huxley is a great one for the savouring and treasuring of words of power or unhackneyed, unexpected beauty, and uses them with singular effect.

"Look over the parapet of the Acropolis. The bridges go dizzily down on their swaying catenaries, the gull's flight chained fast."

Splendid that about the gulls. And "catenaries." Yes, excellent. Refer also to the most amusing interlude in which Denis of "Crome Yellow" entangles himself with "carminative."

We are promised another "Crome Yellow," or something like it, which is any way a joy to look forward to, meanwhile one can keep a sharp look-out in the literary reviews and elsewhere for those too occasional short stories of genius the like of which, "The Gioconda Smile," "The Tillotson Banquet" and "Nuns at Luncheon," made "Mortal Coils" (Chatto & Windus, 1922) so immeasurable an advance upon the immature excellences of "Limbo." For one of the most satisfactory things about this author is the fact of his still surprising youth. He is twenty-eight, and when the war started had scarcely left Eton for Balliol, after being stricken in boyhood with a catastrophic affliction which at the time threatened blindness, knocked a budding scientific career endways and perhaps thus saved us a writer (in those days he learned Braille and typed a novel—since burned—in the dark).

No one can surmise how far or how long Mr. Huxley's extremely personal and interesting talent will go on developing. He seems to be figured as putting earnestly before himself the ideal of a literary alchemist, the fusion of the comic with the beautiful, which has never really been done, as he will have it, since the Elizabethans took comedy seriously enough to make poetry out of it. Something he owes perhaps to heredity. The grandson of two such eminent Victorians as Huxley and Matthew Arnold ought surely to achieve something considerable in the writing line. If you ask me, he has done it already.

ASHLEY GIBSON.

THE READER.

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH.

By R. Ellis Roberts.

I

THERE are many tests by which you can tell literature which is great from literature which, though it may be clever, full of matter, exquisite in style, admirable in philosophy, is still second-rate. In considering creative literature—drama, fiction or narrative poetry—there is one test I would sooner trust than any other. Is the life, the reality of the characters bounded by the book? It is easiest to apply this test when a play or a novel deals only with a brief moment in the lives of the people presented. For instance, among the many other things which distinguishes "Ghosts" and "Rosmersholm" from "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" or "Letty" this is the most obvious—that the people in Ibsen's plays have lived for years before the play opens, and when it ends we leave not a spectacle but a company whose reality makes our own lives seem unconvincing; while the people of Pinero's plays only exist for the brief time they are on the stage, set there to illustrate the dramatist's theme. As in the play, so in the novel. Nowhere does the modern novelist compare so badly with his predecessors as in this power to release his characters, to make us know that they have not been galvanised into activity for our brief amusement, but are living creatures whom he has watched, whom he has known, whose lives he has intimately studied, and whose spirit, he can persuade us, is a part of his own. The absence of this power makes many modern novels thin, impracticable affairs, without the bustle of life, not rising to tragedy or comedy, nor broadening into farce, but flat and unatmospheric, with vague figures patterned neatly against a grey, disconsolate background. It is the lack of this power which makes many of our minor masters, competent craftsmen, skilled or even brilliant in style, seem dull and dead beside the minor Victorian novelists—Trollope, or Charles Reade, Charlotte Yonge or Wilkie Collins.

Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith.
Taken when she was writing "The Tramping Methodist."

It is the presence of this power which makes one claim the epithet "great" for the novels of Sheila Kaye-Smith. It is not always present—is there any author except Ibsen of whom we can predicate the continual presence of this power?—but it is present, especially in the work done in the last twelve years or so, in a very high degree of frequency. I have not space here to discuss that very fascinating question of how an artist acquires and uses this power; but I do not think we shall go far wrong if we say that the qualities chiefly needed are sympathy, imagination and humility—spiritual humility, not intellectual. The greatest bar to the possession of this power is certainly pride or egotism, the vice which will not suffer its victim to pay enough attention to the opinions and characters of his fellows. It is noteworthy that Miss Kaye-Smith, in her earlier immature work, when her own attitude to life is more explicit than it is allowed to be in later novels, shows plainly enough that she regards sympathy and a certain modesty of the soul as two of the most important elements in the spiritual life of man. That is evident in "The Tramping Methodist" and in "Starbrace."

II

Most of us have visited Hastings or St. Leonards; we have rejoiced, or been distracted, according to temperament, at these towns' attractions to visitors—and those who have no appetite for piers, parades, pierrots and perambulators, generally seek comfort in the spaces behind the town. Miss Kaye-Smith belongs to the town which so many Londoners regard only as a holiday place, and I have no idea whether she sought the country in any displeasure with the town, or whether it called to her as the natural origin of the older Hastings so few visitors find, as the mother of the town which was the proudest of the Cinque Ports, and which every schoolboy associated with the Great William until Freeman tried to teach us to speak of the Battle of Senlac.

In our day Sussex has found many lovers. Mr. Kipling and Mr. Belloc have sung the county's praise; Mr. Lucas has discoursed amiably on it, Wilfrid Scawen Blunt's old squire is a Sussex squire; and novelists—Henry James, Stephen Crane (who lived in Brede Place) and E. F. Benson—have found inspiration in Sussex or have put their stories in her towns or about her downs. Yet all of these, except Wilfrid Blunt, I think of as visitors—lovers, no doubt, but too apt to praise Sussex for the virtues a visitor looks for and appreciates, not to find in her and her children the life and genius which is in every county and every hamlet, waiting for the artist to discover it. In Sheila Kaye-Smith Sussex has found its artist, a novelist who has shown extraordinary skill in exhibiting the reactions between people and county; who never, not even in "Sussex Gorse," allows her sense of the gravid strength of the soil to overcome her sense of the quickening

spirit in men; an artist whose work is, I believe, largely responsible for that instinctive movement against urbanisation which has to-day so many devoted, though possibly reticent, followers. And because she has kept to Sussex, because she has devoted herself to understanding the lives and the work of working men and women, Miss Kaye-Smith's novels have a weight, an importance which is necessarily lacking from the records of the suburban life, or the smart life, or the life of the artistic clique. All great imaginative art is of the soul or the soil—and it is an odd thing how soon the soul suffers oblivion or other fatal change, if the soil is forsaken.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith.**

III

Miss Kaye-Smith's first novel—"The Tramping Methodist"—was published in 1908. It is an ambitious failure, from which a discerning critic would have predicted great things of the author. It is autobiographical in form, and the story-teller is the Methodist. It and its successor, "Starbrace," are both stories of the eighteenth century. They need not detain us here, except that they both show Miss Kaye-Smith's virtue in one particular. In each of these books the men are as convincing, as well-seen, as carefully studied as the women. Indeed, Miles Starbrace is a great deal more lifelike than any of the women in this book: his character, with its sweetness and its sullenness, its desperate pathos and desolate unamiability, is a very remarkable piece of work. If you would know how remarkable, you have only to think of some famous masculine novelists—say Mr. Wells, Mr. Bennett or Mr. Galsworthy—and ask yourself whether the young women in their early novels have anything like the verisimilitude of young Miles. While Miles is masterly, the highwaymen and their carefully accurate cant seem to me rather laboured; they are, however, quite as good as the best in this manner, and Michael Daunt has something about him which lifts him out of the suspicion of being merely intelligently constructed. Already in these books we have Sussex. Miss Kaye-Smith is not of those who cover their ignorance of human psychology by long-winded descriptions of the country. Her men and women are always the protagonists of her books—not the downs, nor anything inhuman; for when, as in "Tamarisk Town," the town becomes greater and more vehement than the men, it is only because Monypenny's passion allows it to become so.

There are some who think "Sussex Gorse"—published in 1916, after "Spell Land," "Isle of Thorns" and "Three Against the World"—is the best of Miss Kaye-Smith's novels. It is certainly the one in which her genius first finds its full scope. I hope she is not going to remove "Isle of Thorns" and "Three Against the World" from her "collected" edition, for, in spite of weaknesses, there are beauties in each which I should be sorry to miss; but these novels are the work of one who has not yet quite found herself, while "Sussex Gorse" is as admirable in execution as in plan, and its plan is on a scale only comparable to one of Zola's deeply-dug books, "La Bête Humaine" or "La Terre," and yet does not suffer from his grave fault of allowing the thesis to control the characters.

Reuben Backfield's great fight with Boarzell is presented with a passion and a sympathy of which no English novelist since Mr. Hardy has been capable. That is a strong statement, but "Sussex Gorse" is no book to mince words over. It had in it all the seeds of a magnificent failure; and it is difficult to know whether Miss Kaye-Smith is to be admired more for her courage in propounding herself such a task as this drama of conflict, or for her skill in achievement. It would have been easy to show us Reuben as a mere brute, sacrificing wife, children, comfort, religion, pleasure to his insane passion for adding acre to acre. It would have been possible, but harder, to make him one of those insane idealists, of which "Brand" is the great type, whose hardness wins our hearts, though our head condemn him. It might have seemed impossible to do what Miss Kaye-Smith has done—show us Reuben not only as he seemed to himself, but as he seemed to others, and to show us his family—justified, rebellious, subservient, indifferent—as they are in their own eyes and in his. The book is written with a reserve of Gothic power, with bold, free handling of the people, and with an imaginative wisdom which is the most precious quality in the author's best work.

If you would know how deep is Miss Kaye-Smith's understanding of the country people, I think it may best be shown by a passage in "Little England." Tom Beatup has died in France:

> "Proud"—that was the word they were all throwing at her now: Mus' Archie, the curate, even the minister. They said, "You must be very proud of Tom," just as if all the age-long instincts of her breed did not generate a feeling of shame for one who died out of his bed. Good yeomen died between their sheets, and her son had died in the mud, like a sheep or a dog—and yet she must be proud of him! Thyrza was proud—she said as much between her tears. She said that Tom had died like a hero, fighting for his wife and child.
>
> "He died for England," said Mr. Boullett-Smith.

"He died for Sunday Street," said the Rev. Mr. Sumptson.

"I reckon that as his eyestrings cracked he saw the corner by the Forge and the oasts of Egypt Farm."

It appeared that Tom had died for a great many things, but in her heart Mrs. Beatup guessed that it was really a very little thing that he had died for—"Reckon all he saw then wur our faaces," she said to herself.

Miss Kaye-Smith fortunately was not tempted to treat the war directly, but some of the most remarkable pages of that very remarkable book, "The Challenge to Sirius," reconstructed for us, with an amazing truth to history and to art, the battles of another—the Civil War in the United States. I have no space to discuss that book in any detail, nor "Tamarisk Town," which has a certain translucent charm in its tragedy, especially in the love passages; nor the powerful and truthful "Joanna Godden," a worthy pendant to "Sussex Gorse," and the book which proves that Miss Kaye-Smith can paint a full-length of a woman to equal her full-length portrait of Reuben. Nor is there space to illustrate the shy, shy as essentially country, humour which she indulges in rather too infrequently, nor the poetical spirit which, implicit in all her works, has given us a few lovely lyrics. I cannot close this article, however, without referring to one characteristic of Sheila Kaye-Smith's work. Many of her novels treat of the conflicts and misunderstandings of parents and children, especially of fathers and sons: I think she deserves especial thanks in that she never yields to the cheap temptation of making the parents intolerable, the children invariably right. Here, in a question where authors of more obvious talents have grossly erred or earned a pinchbeck notoriety, she has been conspicuous for that wise impartiality which is aware that in every conflict each protagonist is wrong—and right.

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH: A PERSONAL NOTE.

BY WALTER HAYDON.

EVERY reader of the novels of Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith must have observed what appears to be her extraordinary knowledge of Sussex farm life. In "Joanna Godden" Joanna is herself a farmer, her father having bequeathed to her "the freehold farm of Little Ansdore, in the parish of Pedlinge, Sussex, with all lands and live and dead stock pertaining thereto." The story reeks of the farm throughout; you cannot get away from its atmosphere or its inhabitants — human and animal. "Sussex Gorse," an epic of farm life, is among the greatest novels of this class in our language. Its Reuben Backfield is one of those characters in fiction which cannot be effaced from the memory, and his determination to conquer Boarzell is the story of a struggle with Nature which only a master hand could have told.

Photo by Reginald Haines. **Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith.**

Other of her novels might of course be cited which possess the same wonderful and apparently intimate knowledge of every detail of the farm, and the reader is justified in drawing the conclusion that Miss Kaye-Smith's experience in this direction must have been exceptionally wide and her study of the subject exceedingly close. But with a modesty which is as sincere as her art Miss Kaye-Smith absolutely disclaims any "intimate" knowledge of farming, and she declared to me that she could not pass the simplest examination in either practical or theoretical agriculture. If she could do so, these huge living stretches of canvas would probably never have been painted!

Those who love her work will not, however, be surprised to learn that this knowledge has not been acquired through deliberate study; it has come to her because of the genius of the woman, because of her intense love of the country and of Nature, because she has lived on farms, and because of her marvellously retentive memory. It is of the things she has seen that these stories are made, and it is precisely because they are rooted in reality that they are so intensely alive. One important point should not, however, be overlooked. When Miss Kaye-Smith has been in any doubt upon technical matters connected with farming she has not hesitated to refer to an expert, and that is why no one, so far as I am aware, has ever challenged her accuracy.

Although she now ranks with the greatest women novelists of the day, Miss Kaye-Smith has come through the usual struggles of the new author. Her first novel, "The Tramping Methodist," was rejected no less than six or seven times before it was finally accepted and published in 1908 by Messrs. George Bell & Sons. Since then she has steadily advanced; no "interesting adversities"—to use her own picturesque expression—have come to her, though she had no real prosperity until Cassells issued her "Tamarisk Town" in 1919.

All her life she has loved the country; the topography of Sussex and its fascinating history she learned from her late father who, for some years, was the doctor at Battle. Born and educated in St. Leonards, where she now resides, it is natural she should be passionately fond of the county she has made her own. Miss Kaye-Smith confesses that tennis, golf and other sports are a bore to her, but motoring (she drives her own little car), riding, walking, cycling—anything, in fact, that takes her about the country gives her the greatest pleasure.

Of her childhood Miss Kaye-Smith recalls nothing of outstanding interest beyond the fact that she began to write as soon as she could use her pen. But as she

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never retained any of this early work, Miss Daisy Ashford may be said to have escaped a formidable rival, especially as Miss Kaye-Smith embellished her works with her own illustrations.

It will doubtless interest those who are curious on the point to know the origin of her uncommon surname. The fact is that "Kaye" (her father's mother's name) was tacked on to "Smith" to distinguish the family from the Smiths who actually lived next door! However, the author of "Joanna Godden" must not be held responsible for the acts of her parents, and this particular "Smith" would have been just as great and as interesting—for she is a very interesting woman—with any other prefix or with none at all.

Miss Kaye-Smith has no long line of ancestors stretching back into the dim history of her beloved Sussex; she has in fact no connection with the county except by domicile, for her father was born in India and her mother was a De La Condamine, a Huguenot family that settled in the Channel Islands in the eighteenth century. It may be noted that Sir John Kaye, her father's uncle, was the historian of the Indian Mutiny and the author of several other histories, as well as novels. Mr. Robert Farquharson, the Count Cenci of the famous Shelley revival, is her first cousin.

As to her personal preferences in fiction, Miss Kaye-Smith never tires of Fielding, Thackeray, Mark Twain (in "Huckleberry Finn"), and above all, Jane Austen, of the "ancients"; of the moderns Hardy comes first, then Wells, Galsworthy, Compton Mackenzie—and P. G. Wodehouse. Of her own books she has a great affection for "Green Apple Harvest," though in many ways she does not regard it as so satisfactory as "Sussex Gorse" and "Joanna Godden," which are her favourites.

If she were asked about her experiences during the war it is quite likely that she would endeavour to shelve the question by replying that she helped to add to the errors and misprints in the Army List. What she did for English literature during the war period was to enrich it by the production of "Sussex Gorse" in 1916, "The Challenge to Sirius" in 1917 and "Little England" in 1918.

THOMAS D'URFEY (1653-1723).

By Montague Summers.

"TOM DURFEY. Dyed Feb y^e^ 26 1723." This simple inscription is cut upon a stone in the church wall that once stood facing the open but has been enclosed since 1899, when it was found necessary to add a small room to the fabric, for which purpose the builders took in a portion of the graveyard of St. James's, Piccadilly.

Tom D'Urfey! There are perhaps in the whole history of English literature few if any writers of equal output and such high contemporary fame, who have fallen into completer oblivion than "that ancient Lyric," friend Tom. Throughout his own long day he was in great social request, and, furthermore, he enjoyed very considerable popularity as an author, and although from time to time he met with theatrical failure and literary rebuffs, although the wits lampooned his songs and the critics laughed at his scenes, yet on the other hand he often attained remarkable and outstanding successes upon the stage, whilst his ballads and catches were trolled with delight by the Merry Monarch himself, no mean judge of the lilt of a pretty verse or the swing of a rousing refrain. D'Urfey's talents, indeed, made him a figure in royal circles at Windsor and Whitehall, and in 1719 we find him boasting that during his career he had performed some of his "Things" before Charles II, James II, William and Mary, Queen Anne and Prince George, "with happy and commendable Approbation." Tom was a staunch Tory withal, and on several occasions at her concerts of music Queen Anne expressed herself as immensely diverted by his loyal and witty songs. Once in particular, when he sang some satiric lines which commence:

> "The Crown is too weighty
> For shoulders of eighty";

a rondel made in ridicule of the old Princess Sophia, Electress Dowager of Hanover, whom the Queen heartily detested, Her Majesty ordered him a handsel of fifty guineas to mark her appreciation.

Amongst D'Urfey's other patrons occur many distinguished names: the Dukes of Richmond, Albemarle, Ormond, Bedford, Argyll; the Duchess of Chandos; the Earls of Dorset, Berkeley, Carlisle; Lord Lansdowne; Lord Morpeth; Speaker Bromley, and a score besides. How then are we to account for the exceptional forgetfulness which covers his name—nay, more, for the contempt with which he is regarded by modern writers—and they are few enow—who speak of him? The question is an interesting one, and it admits, I think, of an answer. In the first place we must recognise that perhaps no Restoration author (save, it may be, Pepys) reflects so nearly and so closely his period with all its minutest intimacies as does Thomas D'Urfey. His work throughout is intensely topical, and not merely topical in references and allusions, but topical in presentment, spirit, and character. He mirrors and echoes not only the changing fashions in dress and in speech, but even captures the shortest-lived vogues and vagaries which have escaped all other record save his comedies—to be read solely in the original quartos—and a sheaf of unknown pasquils, of which many are not yet printed. An example of D'Urfey's evaporated humour may be seen in the First Act of "The Richmond Heiress," a comedy produced in 1693, when Sir Quibble Quere (acted by Bright) questions the young town-sparks, Frederick and Quickwit (Joseph Williams and Dogget) about the London playhouses and the favourite performers. "Does Mr. Sanford act the Villain still, prithee?" he prattles. "And Mr. Powell, what's he doing, prithee, ha? What new Part is he studying? . . . And then, I'll say't, there's Mr. Bowman, and Mr. Bright, and

Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Hains." To a contemporary audience this would have been full of force and fun. The later reader can but grasp the point through the medium of explanatory notes, and if he thereby gains one half of the meaning he loses the whole of the jest. D'Urfey offers a mass of valuable detail to those who are studying the Restoration era, but it is useless to come to D'Urfey for information without already possessing a fairly intimate knowledge of the later decades of the seventeenth century.

Another fact which must be frankly confessed is that with regard to our author not a few of the specialists themselves have gone astray. They have read the famous letter which speaks of "The Three Dukes of Dunstable"—one of D'Urfey's feeblest farces, being in truth a perversion of Fletcher's rococo "The Noble Gentleman"—where "gentle George" Etherege from his Ratisbon exile jeers at the play as "monstrous and insipid," and cries, "I rejoiced to hear that it was so solemnly interred to the tune of catcalls." They remember again the gossip concerning Dryden, who when the curtain had fallen upon a new comedy by D'Urfey, on being accosted by a critic with the words: "Even Tom, sir, can't write us a worse play than this," smartly rejoined, "If you knew my friend Tom as well as I do you would know that he will write us many a worse play than the one we have just seen." In any case the story is doubtful, and we may not impertinently recall that the Great Man was very distant, and even severe to Crowne upon the success of "The Country Wit," whilst when, owing to the sudden illness of Mrs. Barry, "Darius" lamentably failed, he comforted Crowne with a pinch from his snuff-box and a gracious commendation of the exploded tragedy. Modern literary historians have relied too implicitly upon such anecdotes which, as they deem, are notably reinforced by Buckingham's "Sing-song D'Urfey placed beneath abuses," or Pope's "Another D'Urfey—Ward! shall sing in thee." They have unhappily turned to "The Siege of Memphis" or "The Famous History of Massaniello" and all too easily cited some bouncing fustian, whence D'Urfey is promptly damned. But so sweeping a verdict is manifestly unjust. That D'Urfey's sins are great cannot be denied. "The Siege of Memphis" is writ in "Ercles' vein." "Massaniello," with its ridiculous Surrey-side villain, "Julio Genovino, a Jesuit," is bombastic and bad. Fletcher's charming "Sea Voyage" has suffered sadly in its gawky alteration, "A Commonwealth of Women." The distortion of "Cymbeline" as "The Injured Princess; or, The Fatal Wager," is even more unpardonable. On the other hand we should consider that of his one-and-thirty dramatic pieces twenty-two are comedies, and it is by these and by his lively songs that D'Urfey's worth must fairly be estimated.

Thomas D'Urfey.
From a sketch taken at Knoll, by C. Page.

Of the comedies Erskine Baker writes: "They are very far from being totally devoid of merit. The plots are in general busy, intricate and entertaining; the characters not ill-drawn, although rather too farcical; and the language, if not perfectly correct, is yet easy and well adapted for the dialogue of comedy." In his own day Gildon, a Draco among the critics, commended D'Urfey as "a master of farce." To us he seems something more. If our standard is to be that of Terence, Molière, Congreve and Etherege, then D'Urfey has seldom accomplished anything save busy and entertaining farces. But surely this is over-nice, and Thalia's realm boasts a wider latitude. If we allow that the "Mostellaria," the "Relapse," "Le Baruffe Chiozzotte," "Le Mariage de Figaro" are comedies, by no right can we deny that name to "Madam Fickle," "Love for Money," "The Marriage-Hater Match'd" and "Intrigues at Versailles." The difference, albeit considerable, is not of kind, but of degree.

Not the least interesting amongst D'Urfey's pieces is a dramatisation in three parts of "Don Quixote." This is excellently done, and is of itself a notable achievement, for there are few romances more difficult to adapt to the stage than the great work of Cervantes. If we except the lost "Cardenio," ascribed to Shakespeare and Fletcher, which (I would suggest) might have dealt with the loves of Cardenio and Lucinda and the adventures of Dorothea in the Sierra Morena, D'Urfey's is the first of some fourteen English plays founded upon "Don Quixote," and it is infinitely the best. Macfarren's libretto; W. G. Wills's "one act incident" (in which, as it may be remembered, the late Sir Henry Irving played the Knight); George Almar's ambitious drama—all seem very thin by the side of D'Urfey's clever scenes and well-filled stage. Part I opens with Don Quixote tilting at the windmills. There are various episodes at the wayside inn, and a scene with the galley-slaves. Part II is chiefly concerned with Sancho Panza's governorship and the elaborate tricks played upon Don Quixote at the Court of the Duke and Duchess. Part III gives us the "Marriage of Mary the Buxom" and the puppet-show. The puppets were "designed to be acted by children." Sancho Panza's wife figures largely in the comedy, together with his daughter, Mary the Buxom, "a rude, laughing, clownish Hoyden; incomparably acted by Mrs. Verbruggen." Although

they are D'Urfey's best-known lines it cannot be amiss once more to quote the beautiful dirge sung at the funeral of Chrysostom. It has been admirably compared by Addington Symonds with the exquisite elegies of the Greek Anthology, and even were it his sole claim to memory, the author of the following poem could assuredly never be forgotten:

"Sleep, poor Youth, sleep in Peace,
Reliev'd from Love and Mortal Care;
Whilst we that pine in Life's Disease,
Uncertain Bless'd, less happy are.
Couch'd in the dark and silent Grave,
No ills of Fate thou now canst fear;
In vain wou'd Tyrant Pow'r enslave,
Or scornful Beauty be severe.

"Wars, that do fatal Storms disperse,
Far from thy happy Mansion keep;
Earthquakes that shake the Universe,
Can't rock thee into sounder Sleep.
With all the Charms of Peace possest,
Secure from Life's Torment or Pain,
Sleep and indulge thy self with Rest,
Nor dream thou e'er shalt rise again."

THE GOTHIC BACKGROUND OF MICHAEL SADLEIR.

BY LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND.

THE author of "Privilege" and of "Desolate Splendour" lays great stress on "background." This is why I saw Mr. Michael Sadleir in his house off the Old Brompton Road, and in a sombre room picked out by a large gilded bookcase. He threw himself into a deep lounge-chair there, and expressed views about his own work and literature in general.

While his cigar was under weigh, he deprecated the idea of a development of "Who's Who," modestly remarking that he has as yet scarcely completed as much work as would entitle him to a future niche in the "Dictionary of National Biography." Sadleir is a curious composition of utter confidence and of decisive limitations. Before dealing with his work I asked him to give me some impressions of his past life, and he did so:

"I was born in Oxford in 1888, my father being at the time Steward of Christchurch. My parents' friends who used to come to the house were mainly University people, serious or cynical. My father was shy with me as a child, although he took infinite pains to instruct me in his then favourite subject—architecture—and in the literary schools at that time fashionable among the intelligentsia. He and my mother were deeply interested in Robert Browning and George Meredith; a little later they became enthusiastic readers of Thomas Hardy. If I did not in these early years see very much of my father it was partly because of his shy preoccupation with thoughtful subjects, and partly because his work as organiser of the University Extension Lectures kept him a good deal from home. It seems strange, nevertheless, that although an only child in a house full of books and thoughtful, bookish conversation, I had no serious thoughts of writing until many years later.

"At Balliol I plunged right into the Compton Mackenzie shallows. I also kept tuberoses in delicate vases in my room, burned incense and ran a narrow gamut in letters from Pater to Verlaine. The other lettered group in Balliol was ascetically Shavian.

"About this time I met Middleton Murry, of Brazenose, and we became devout members of the Milton Society. Murry and I went over to Paris and studied the post-Impressionists at first hand. We saw and met many ferocious poets and artists. I changed the decoration of my rooms, swept away the tuberoses, and replaced the old Decadence with the audacity of the New. We ran a magazine called *Rhythm*, but when Middleton Murry married Katherine Mansfield, he carried the concern off to London and edited it from there.

"After college I joined the house of Constable, and found a publishing firm a place of adventure. The discipline of routine is pleasant to me and I am genuinely interested in the economics of book-making."

I asked Mr. Sadleir to get to his own novels, and he dealt exhaustively with what he called the neo-Gothic novel. He has the very sound idea that the Victorian novelists knew their job thoroughly; but his own present inclination is to experiment with a blend of Victorian solidity and romantic colour, the latter in some sort borrowed from the Gothic romance of Horace Walpole, Mrs. Radcliffe and "Monk" Lewis.

"I hold," he continued, "that the first duty of a novelist is to tell a story, but I hold also that the novelist should be at liberty to distort probability to any extent in the interest of a drama of action, provided sound characterisation is observed, and provided also that there is an affinity, a harmony, between the characters and their background in a period. Not of necessity is it that the people of a novel and their environment should synchronise.

"In old families tradition maintains a certain fitness and familiarity between the vivid life of a generation and the surroundings of the generations before.

"The Gothic romancers allowed conventional mannerism to spoil what was originally a good idea. In their conception of romantic fiction was great potential beauty. They created primarily background, in front of which they staged a story. But the reserves and mannerisms of their period made their stories unreal and tedious, and they grew so hot on the trail of the supernatural that they came to despise the natural, which alone could have given life to the dead bones of an impeccable theory. Wherefore to-day their rhetoric is merely chatter, like the echoes of a street of cinema. But I am sure, none the less, that the theory of the 'Tale of Terror' was sound, and that is why I wrote 'Privilege' on that old model.

"'Privilege,' with its neo-Gothic setting, was a tale of the grim petulance of a too complex family. I tried to achieve beauty by deliberate interaction of background and personality.

"It has been suggested that the book had a purpose, and that purpose was a defence of aristocracy or a

flaunting of feudal power. I had no such object in view. I detest propaganda in fiction, as something at once unwieldy and impertinent.

"There is contrast and conflict in it between old lands and new ideas. The temporal or permanent decay of the lords of the soil who live on their estates —or fail because of them—and the rise, in the early nineteenth century, of the new lords of industry, is a theme which has the dignity of history. A writer of romance has turned to it—Stanley Weyman has forsaken the colour of costumed intrigue for the fight between ease and utilitarianism in 'Ovington's Bank'; and several of the younger school have taken a similar course.

"In my second novel, 'Desolate Splendour,' I have dealt with lurid incidents and bizarre personalities, but with staging of another kind than that used in 'Privilege.' In my dedicatory sentence I speak of the book as 'flamboyant.' The word was deliberately and carefully chosen. If contrasted techniques of descriptive and narrative prose are successfully to be manipulated in the interests of vigour and beauty, the stylistic influence of both must be a true one. Therefore 'Desolate Splendour' is flamboyant because of its flamboyant theme: therefore 'Privilege' was neo-Gothic because its polished, fretful characters would have it so."

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Michael Sadleir.**

People who may be indifferent to, or prejudiced against, Mr. Sadleir's highly-mannered fiction, will turn with pleasure to his "Excursions in Victorian Bibliography," in which a rather desiccated craft is freshened by impressions of the subjects in the volume—Anthony Trollope, Benjamin Disraeli, Captain Marryat, Wilkie Collins, Charles Reade, Whyte Melville, Mrs. Gaskell and Herman Melville. By far the greatest of these, according to Mr. Sadleir's taste, is Anthony Trollope. He considers him one of the greatest of all English novelists. Most of the Trollope idolators pin their innermost faith to the "Barchester Chronicles," beginning with "The Warden." Sadleir is even more enthusiastic about Trollope's unecclesiastical novels, some of them almost forgotten by this generation. He exults in "Phineas Finn: The Irish Member," "The Eustace Diamonds," "The Belton Estate," "Mr. Scarborough's Family," "The Duke's Children," "The Claverings," and others. It is a matter of indifference to Sadleir that the author he acknowledges as Master never had a Gothic background or a flamboyant projection.

It is a little strange, by the way, that this most steady-going and respectable of the major Victorians should have aroused such a flame of worship in the bosom of such a vehement romanticist as Sadleir; but I know that Hugh Walpole, a born idealist, has also an extraordinary penchant for the gaiters of that commonplace Anthony, whose theory of authorship was mainly a theory of industry, and who allowed no mood of idleness to spoil the regularity of his writing life.

Sadleir has paid a necessary but barely adequate tribute to the very best constructor of plots among the Great Victorians, on whom Charles Dickens looked with envy. It is time that Wilkie Collins came into his own again as a king of story-tellers. Collins had no real sense of humour, and was lacking in some other gifts, but he built up a novel as the Norman craftsmen built up a cathedral.

"He does not," says Sadleir, "reveal to us human nature as does Trollope; nor, like Disraeli, pique our interest with satiric brilliance on topics or follies of the day; he has none of Marryat's gay familiarity with the winds that blow and the sun that shines on the cross-roads of life's pilgrimage; he has no fund of rough but genial humanity like Reade; he is not tender like Mrs. Gaskell, nor a mystic visionary like Herman Melville; even Whyte Melville, with his stilted rhetoric and clumsy *naïveté*, has at times an attractive freshness that Collins lacked. But if we rid our minds of all thought of him as seeking to throw on the dark places of existence the light of interpretation, looking to him rather for entertainment and for excitement, for deft mystery and for extraordinary coincidence, he will not disappoint us."

Mr. Sadleir avows himself no critic, and is distinctly unconventional in his views about fiction. He admires Edith Wharton, but is bored by several famous women writers of our own immediate day. I regret to say that he is convinced that no woman has yet done anything supreme in fiction.

Amazingly enough, he questions the technical literary competence of Thomas Hardy, and is not afraid, when speaking of younger contemporary novelists, to praise the style of the author of "This Freedom."

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

MARCH, 1923.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II, IV and V are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best quotation from English verse or prose in praise of Music.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

I.—The PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best original lyric is awarded to William MacDermott, of 57, Hamilton Street, Govan, Glasgow, for the following:

EXILE.

The fine streets of the city sometimes stir the heart in me
And I see them as I saw them in the morning of my days,
But I think of little boreens that go straggling to the sea,
When stars with lamps are vying in the city's quietened ways.

There are miles and miles of windows here a-blazing thro' the night,
And there's beauty in the long roads when the traffic's ceased to roar,
But I see the cabin windows capture all the rosy light
When veils of mist are creeping up the gaps of Barnesmore.

Oh I walk in little boreens in the tenderness of sleep,
And hills are gay and golden in the fire-clouds of the west,
And I see the foam-white currachs on the dim and distant deep,
Tossing, laughter-filled, and speeding to the Islands of the Blest.

There's singing here and plenty when the weary day is past,
Oh there's singing and there's music tho' the aches may not depart,
But I hear her gentle lilting when the sheep are home at last,
And the old song and the wild song that nestled in my heart.

We also select for printing:

VIA CRUCIS.

The fight is ended, and the long day done;
We sheathe our weary swords again, and smile,
And count our gains beneath the setting sun;
The tide of battle ebbs, so—rest awhile.

What have we won in this fierce fight of ours,
Where all around us lie the happy dead?
A little glory, honour's gaudy flowers—
We bind its chaplets to a careless head!

Then, who are victors in this hard fought fight?
The dead, who die without a smirch or stain,
Or we—who, living—see before us, night,
And then the morrow, when we fight again.

(Helen Gordon, 75, Highbury Avenue, Thornton Heath, S.E.)

CLASS.

The riot of the playgrounds stills
To sunlit emptiness, and then
A flowing tide of childhood fills
The silence of my room again.

Preoccupied with greater things
Than sums, they suck their pens and stare;
And I, because a throstle sings,
Could weep to see them prisoned there.

(L. M. Priest, 71, Gipsy Lane, Norwich.)

We also select for special commendation Anne MacDonald (Bridge of Allan), J. Kilmeny Keith (West Kensington), M. E. Holmes (Kensington), Winnifred Tasker (Bournemouth), V. H. Friedlander (Buckhurst Hill), G. D. (no address), W. Penn Gaskell (Postbridge), F. Pritchard (Holmwood), Barbara Paul (St. John's Wood), Christine Hole (Gainsborough), Mabel Greenwood (London, W.), Archie L. Pearce (Sydenham), Esther Raworth (Harrogate), Marion Delesmyn (Fulham), L. Pekarsky, B.A. (Johannesburg), H. M. Blakiston (Dannevirke, N.Z.), J. P. (Orkney), Margery H. Sykes (Elmley Castle), K. E. M. Caley (Staplehurst), Clifford Allen (Gravesend), C. H. W. (Edinburgh), Freda Isobel Noble (London, E.), Mariquita Guitierrez (San Sebastian), M. M. (Wimbledon), Una Cheverton (Chatham), Kathleen Ida Noble (London, E.), Ella Swaine (Ilkley), Phyllis Erica Noble (London, E.), W. Swayne Little (Dublin), Dorothea Humphreys (Bolton), Joseph Wheeler (Hither Green), May Rowland (Eastbourne), Doris Wibberley (Burton-on-Trent), Dorothy Slide (Birmingham), M. Redding (Edinburgh), Audrie E. M. Wilks (Sheffield), B. M. Wills (Almora, N. India), Sidney Taylor (Liverpool), Ivan Adair (Dublin), E. Brown (North Walsall), H. Ross (Hove), H. I. Strand (Seaton), M. Hayward Potter (Rome), Annie L. Knowles (Manchester), Marion Elizabeth Stark (Wellesley, Mass.), Phyllis Howell (Carmarthen), Barbara MacIver (Kingussie), Dorothy Winder (Scarborough), F. Waring Naish (Charlbury), Margaret Aldridge (St. John's Wood), John Leekey (St. Leonards-on-Sea), Edgar Sears (Nottingham), E. R. Faraday (Brimfield).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to Miss M. M. Youell, of The Mill House, Ufford, Woodbridge, Suffolk, for the following:

THE LUCK OF THE KID. By RIDGWELL CULLUM.
(Cecil Palmer.)

" He put in his thumb,
And pulled out a plum."

Nursery Rhyme.

We also select for printing:

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARGOT ASQUITH, PART TWO.
(Thornton Butterworth.)

" What, hath this thing appeared again. . . ."
SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet*, Act 1, Sc. 1, line 22.

(Dudley Edwards, 14, Dumfries Place, Cardiff.)

THE POOR MAN. By STELLA BENSON.
(Macmillan.)

(1) " Who steals my purse, steals trash."
SHAKESPEARE, *Othello*.

(B. Williams, Penllwyn Park, Carmarthen, and Annie E. White, Kelso, Scotland.)

(2) " And passing rich on forty pounds a year."
O. GOLDSMITH, *The Deserted Village*.

(Mrs. M. M. Snow, Northdown Hill School, Cliftonville, Margate.)

MARY OF MANY LOVES. By AMY J. BAKER. (John Long.)

" One that loved not wisely but too well."
SHAKESPEARE, *Othello*.

(N. Stuart Shepherd, The Vicarage, Alfrick, Worcester.)

III.—THE PRIZE for the best passage from English literature in which pathos and humour were mingled, is divided and TWO BOOKS each awarded to W. L. Dudley, of Ranfurly Castle School, Bridge of Weir, Scotland, and M. Meta Brady, of 57, St. Charles Square, North Kensington, W.10, both of whom sent the following:

FALSTAFF'S DEATH.

HOST: Nay, sure, he's not in hell; he's in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom. A' made a finer end and went away an it had been any christom child; a' parted even just between twelve and one, even at the turning of the tide; for after I saw him fumble with the sheets and play with flowers and smile upon his fingers' ends, I knew there was but one way; for his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a' babbled of green fields. How now, Sir John! quoth I; what man! be o' good cheer. So a' cried out, God, God, God! three or four times. Now I, to comfort him, bid him a' should not think of God; I hoped there was no need to trouble himself with any such thoughts yet. So a' bade me lay more clothes on his feet; I put my hand into the bed and felt them and they were as cold as any stone.

Henry V, Act 2, Scene 3.

We select for special commendation the passages sent by G. W. Turner (Wandsworth Common), George Seth, junr. (Edinburgh), A. Eleanor Pinnington (Exeter), Beryl Brown (London, N.W.), May W. Harrison (Lincoln), H. C. Dent (Rotherham), W. J. Walker (Dundee), Caroline Coxhan (New Malden), D. M. Gibbins (Acton), Wilfred B. Whitaker (Gravesend), A. M. Hillier (London, N.), B. M. Beard (Bexleyheath), Margery Constance (Yiewsley), S. Davis (Eastbourne), J. A. Jenkins (Liverpool), Miles March (Liverpool), Benjamin Brady (London, W.), Kathleen E. M. Drury (Bedford), Miss Capern (East Sheen).

IV.—THE PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review in not more than a hundred words is awarded to G. Ralton Barnard, of 6, The Crescent, York, for the following:

SWEET PEPPER. By GEOFFREY MOSS.
(Constable.)

If " Sweet Pepper " is Mr. Moss's first attempt at novel-writing then he is to be congratulated upon so remarkable an achievement. The book is a clever study of a young girl's life, true in every detail. The heroine, Jill, in spite of her unorthodox ideas of sex, is a typical English girl, lovable and fascinating. The descriptions of life in Budapest and Vienna after the war are wonderfully arresting, and the chapter describing the great procession is a literary achievement of no mean order. Undoubtedly this is a book to be read by all who care for real literature.

We also select for printing:

THE OUTLINE OF LITERATURE AND ART (PART I).

By JOHN DRINKWATER AND SIR WILLIAM ORPEN.
(Newnes.)

This " Outline " is a revelation to the thoughtful reader. In this Part I we are taught how small an atom is a whole generation on the face of the world's development. It teaches us that Literature is an immense structure, whereof the geniuses who have flamed out on the road of its history are but cornerstones keeping intact the soul of great thought. The student possessing limited opportunities will be grateful for the " Outline," as showing concisely the relationship between Literature, Art and Religion, to gain which knowledge many years of digging and delving in the dark would have been his only hope.

(Phillis Rees, 116, Newton Street, Macclesfield.)

POUM. By PAUL AND VICTOR MARGUERITTE.
Translated by BÉRENGÈRE DRILLIÈN.
(Philpot.)

Lovers of children will welcome this record of childhood memories of these famous French writers. Many will compare similar experiences in their own recollections. Such books which awaken us to unsuspected child mind activities will guide us more accurately in their training and in our own attitude as a revelation to the receptive child. It is too true that the older generation are apt to forget that they were once young, and in this clever translation of candid child revelations, we have a reminder that should prove beneficial to the Pauls and Victors of the younger generation.

(Emily E. Moore, Sulworthy, 22, Broadwater Avenue, Letchworth, Herts.)

We also select for special commendation the reviews by Sybil G. Dean (Exmouth), N. Johnson (Hull), Winifred M. Davies (Derby), H. C. Scott (London, W.C.), B. Noël Saxelby (Manchester), Mannington Sayers (Monmouth), Frederick Willmer (Ramsey), G. W. Bowes (Rishton), Maude R. Fleeson (Manchester), Sidney S. Wright (Bromley), M. Eayres (London, N.), Mrs. Sybilla Kirkland Vesey (Glenfarg), Kathleen Rice (Harpenden), Edith J. Temple (East Sheen), A. P. Pearson (Halifax), Mrs. A. T. Simmons (Parkstone), Mrs. M. Irene Taylor (Stourbridge), W. Herbert Green (Sheffield), J. Cuthbert Scott (Cheltenham), M. E. Holmes (Kensington), Christian Milne (Fraserburgh), Sidney Anderson (West Didsbury), I. K. Godfrey (Wimbledon).

V.—THE PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN is awarded to Isobel Simpson, of Gowan Bank, Dundee.

THE ART OF SIBYL THORNDIKE.

By GRAHAM SUTTON.

"A MAN'S nature," says Bacon, "is best perceived . . . in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaveth him." And so Miss Thorndike's comedy shows you the obverse of her great tragic conceptions. Wide as it is, her art is curiously consistent. A breath of modernity here, the least touch of latent humour there, keeps her most tragic characters sane and human. Conversely her very farce is potentially passionate; and like Charles Chaplin, she weaves her subtlest comedy-webs with a woof of tragic experience; so that where shallower players would be frivolous merely, these two romantics are at once frivolous and oddly disturbing.

All of which is only another way of saying that the actress has temperament. One cannot live always on the heights. There remain the vamp's off-duty hours—the flamboyant, the fantastic, the high animal spirits—the days when Cleopatra, just because she *is* Cleopatra, must needs hop those forty paces in pyjamas as Miss Thorndike does here. "Advertising April" * is a merry conceit which might have been merrier (but not much) with a more foolish actress. Miss Thorndike can see life, for comic purposes, distortedly; but she still sees it whole. In this comedy one could have wished Hobart, the press-agent husband, to monopolise the brains of the partnership, and April herself to be no more than the flaunting extravagant quean, the fine feather which the publicity-puff bloweth where it listeth. And indeed I think the play was written so; but it asked too much of the actress. Sophistication dallied with innocence in Miss Thorndike's April. The lamp of intelligence shone through the turnip-head too brightly. The player was helplessly greater than the part.

For behind all Miss Thorndike's acting there is life and character, as well as stage-trickery; bitter experience, one guesses, strifes and ambitions and disappointments which give her parts a personality deeper than the paint they wear. Even in tragedy (when she is suitably cast) you have that sense of restraint—of power, greater than visible, leashed in reserve. Variety, too: her friends, and interviewers, tell that she began public life as a professional pianist, and it is curious how she recalls the great pianists in her different moods. Now she is Pachmann, sprawling over a part; fondling it as he fondles the piano, like some great bear with its cub; now Backhaus, still as death, as he sits when playing that rushing F minor study of Chopin, his cold intensity in uncanny contrast to the passion that flows from his fingers. Perhaps it is because she too is trained to the last inch, till she can play upon that wonderful body and voice of hers as a *maestro* plays on his instrument; so that in her playing, as in theirs, there are times when technique is at once perfect and transcended; when the mind's eye sees vistas and the ear catches spiritualities of tone which never were in the written word or score; when mind triumphs over matter, and you hear the "harps in the air."

* Published by Blackwell, Oxford.

The Grand Guignol has been soundly rated for its share in her career. And it had certainly one evil effect, not so much on her art as on her managerial judgment: it gave her a brilliant series of snapshot successes—tragedies so brief that they could be rushed through on the top gear of emotion; five-finger exercises in technique, dazzling indeed, but quite isolated from the rest of the bill. And it is possible that these successes made her believe that full-length parts might be found, in which a similar effect could be spread over the whole evening. Such a part was Charlotte Fériol in "The Scandal"—a neurotic nightmare, long drawn out; such, and worse, that of Beatrice in "The Cenci."

Now in the theatre a little of this sort of intensity goes a long way, and a lot becomes tedious. I protest I am not easily bored by a play; I have never slept in a theatre in my life; yet I could cheerfully have slept through most of "The Cenci," had not the alternate chatter and mastication of two ladies behind me prevented it. What an appallingly bad play! And what an astute publicity agent, a very Hobart, to keep us all so busy discussing the play's immorality that we had no time to notice its badness! Its central theme is not old Cenci's incest in particular but his madness in general; and listen as you will, you find this madness nowhere accounted for. Medea is mad, but we are shown the source of her bitterness; old Cenci is simply a Mad Hatter with the fun left out. So that the whole play, often stupendous in expression, is without foundation in reason and has no point of contact with reality. Shelley, the poet, knew his craft. Shelley the playwright took his construction ready-made from the Dark Age of English melodrama. And a good deal of the result (to speak dramatically and unpoetically) is rubbish unjudgable by any normal standard:

> "We do it wrong, being so nonsensical,
> To offer it the show of sanity."

Mr. Robert Farquharson, one suspects, felt this and went all out for the bizarre, the theatrical, the pyrotechnically impressive; at times reeling like a drunken man, at times mouthing like a parody of Henry Irving, he achieved a kind of distorted success of ingenuity. And Beatrice? What was poor Beatrice to do in that galley? Her noble rage was eclipsed ere it had time to shine. Madness was at a discount; for they were all mad in the Cenci household, from the old man down to the poor-but-honest murderer who tried to escape in an embroidered bed-quilt. Pity and terror were stone dead after the bathotic at-home in the first act. Long before the trial scene, the stunned mind had ceased to wonder or care. Add to this that Miss Thorndike was never the woman for Beatrice—the "most gentle and amiable being" of Shelley's preface; granted that she was "one of those rare persons in whom energy and gentleness dwell together without destroying one another"; but she would have destroyed old Cenci in her cradle. She was too hefty and too formidable. One asked, how did the old man dare to play his

tricks when a breath of hers, one punch from that magnificent shoulder, would have resolved him to his elements — hot air, and a little pile of sawdust?

"Medea" was admirably cast. Few players could better Lewis Casson's Messenger, a revelation to those who had only seen him as some dry old man; or Rosina Filippi's crone, at once dirgeful and awesomely distinct; or Lawrence Anderson's Jason, a strong, plausible voice with the right brassy ring in it that the part requires; and Medea dominant still. . . . The play taught one, seeing it soon after "The Cenci," to what heights madness treated dramatically and not merely theatrically can rise on the stage. For here again is madness; not raving in the void, but shown with cause and effect inevitably, so that it comes within the potential range of human experience. Medea is Everywoman; and as Everywoman Miss Thorndike played her, taking all human history for her province—the greatness and littleness of womanhood, the pomp of war, the tyranny of princes, the tragedy of too-passionate love burnt down to its ash—not in one legendary case of a demented murderess, but in all true cases; and above these, heaped high in bitter measure, the unheeded sorrow of all women since the world began. And for once, the player equal to the theme. The full sure gestures, the marvellous light and shade of that great deep heroic voice, the sneer and the anguish, barbaric insolence and pagan despair; now loud and menacing, now crafty, suppliant, seductive, now deep again with the note of a great bell, the despair of mariners aghast on a lee shore. And always restraint, restraint . . . so much expressed, so much still left to the imagination. There were times when her silence was more terrible than speech; when the proud spirit seemed to flag and wane, and the body to seek support from the doors soon to be closed against it, crouching and husbanding its forces for the last great effort of all. She was Dürer's Melencolia then, as seen by our own poet:

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Miss Sibyl Thorndike.**

"Her folded wings as of a mighty eagle,
But all too impotent to lift the regal
Robustness of her earthborn strength and pride—"

but with barbaric splendour added to the eagle's majesty, a noble pyramid of colour against the pitiless gate. So that here at last, you would say, was the very stuff of Pater's fantasy, the head upon which all the ends of the world were come; and if the eyelids were a little weary, the mouth at least was set firm against the buffets of mischance, "the feet thick-shod to tread all weakness down." A noble portrait—greater than life-size yet of a living woman—wherein the artist's temperament was fused at white heat into the poet's vision; a vision of one who would go down if need be fighting heroically, "sustained by her indomitable will"; beaten, but not afraid.

New Books.

THE HEIR OF RADCLIFFE.*

The admirers of Mr. Sadleir's previous novel, "Privilege," will admire "Desolate Splendour." And conversely, those who attacked "Privilege" may be expected to temper their next broadside. The author has boldly included among his quotations from critical opinion of his past work the savage sentences of our friend Mencken of Baltimore. It seems to the present reviewer that Mr. Mencken went for "Privilege" with such a rush of slapstick and bladder that he had not the time to notice in Mr. Sadleir's equipment quite a number of virtues. It may not be amiss, therefore, if a friendly hint is sent out to Mr. Mencken ere once again he sees red, on this occasion at sight of a truly beautiful dust-cover of soft green, blue and yellow that Mrs. Sadleir has designed and painted, and which I presume is to enclose the American edition, else readers across the Atlantic will miss an essential part of the pleasure that the publication of "Desolate Splendour" promises to provide.

Mr. Sadleir's preoccupation is still with the decay of an aristocratic type, belonging to the good old times which, as an astute Frenchman has put it, have, thank God, gone for ever. But, curiously enough, whereas the principal figures in "Privilege" were mostly objectionable, either as puppies or puppets, here they are attractive and often charmingly human in spite of their creator. The two opening chapters, written statically, with a fine sense of bleak and scowling background, and plainly intended to prepare us for the grim, decadent actions of grim, decadent people, are followed by an exciting, quickly and yet smoothly moving narrative that recalls the Victorian masters with whom Mr. Sadleir's heart is; and hardly one of those grim, decadent people fails to surprise us agreeably. We find even old Mrs. Plethern a pleasant and affable aristocrat, in spite of her weird habit of solitary card-playing at all hours of day and night in her tower, and in spite of the amazing things she does before the end; hardly ever the senile, mordant hag whom the author, by a few brutal and not quite legitimate touches, has led us to expect. What few faults may be found in "Desolate Splendour," the chief of them is surely that Mr. Sadleir's description of his characters does not always tally with

* "Desolate Splendour." By Michael Sadleir. 7s. 6d. (Constable.)

the characters themselves as revealed in their talk and actions. And what is more, once we have come face to face with the Pletherns, nothing that may afterwards be said in derogation is quite convincing. This is a compliment to Mr. Sadleir's charm of manner.

But the plot of "Desolate Splendour" is unravelled with a skill that diverts us from bothering overmuch about faults, compelling our admiration and breathless attention right to the climax—a climax that Mrs. Radcliffe would have envied for its glorious improbability, although it has none of the Radcliffian crudity. The web that is spun around Charles Plethern and his beautiful young ward, Viola Marvell, by enemies and relatives alike becomes a powerful and terrifying tangle, with those who are the weavers as well as its captives obeying Mr. Sadleir's instructions admirably. Mr. Sadleir has, I think, revealed himself in this novel to be what the reviewer calls a "born story-teller" when he is at a loss for a phrase less unoriginal. I look to him to eschew analytic characterisation henceforward for a better cause: by which I mean that he is splendidly equipped, if he will but let himself go, to take up definitely the mantle of that rare old succession of novelists which was thought to have petered out with the author of "The Woman in White."

That some such purpose is in his own mind seems to be indicated by the fact that his list of books, printed to face the title page of "Desolate Splendour," goes back no further than "Privilege," for in his first two novels plot and action were his concern hardly at all. And yet somehow I feel that he ought not to let us lose sight of "Hyssop," with which he began. For that volume contains what seems the best study, so far, of the busy, eager, and yet half-insincere life of art and letters at one of the great universities, as distinct from its social life, an opinion to which Oxford young men of to-day as well as yesterday will readily subscribe.

THOMAS MOULT.

TWO PROFESSORS.*

Professor Oliver Elton is one of several persons who make me wonder how large the really intelligent reading public is. Among our few million print-consumers, how many are there who know anything about the work of this fine scholar and admirable writer? The northern capitals are wiser than we. Here in the south we seem to be entirely sheepish. We follow the crowd, even when (as the crowd will) it gathers admiringly round some noisy windbag. A solemn young man of considerable disability writes a review in which he observes parenthetically that "Paradise Lost" is unreadable and "Othello" a feeble melodrama. In a short time he prints his review (with some more like it) in a volume, and then other solemn young men (his friends) proceed to write reviews of his reviews, announcing that a new and original critic has arrived. I hate to appear sceptical or cynical, but I ask, how many recent volumes containing reprinted criticism have been worth the expenditure of one shilling in cash and ten minutes in time?

And all the while we have among us, living and writing, real critics and interpreters of a very high order, Oliver Elton being one of the best. He has a large mind and a full mind. He does really know something. He has not only the ability to take a view of things, but he has the things to take a view of. In the present volume, such papers as "The Entente in Literature" and "Poetic Romancers after 1850" could be expanded into books without any transgression of the limits there laid down. He can sum up his man in a phrase, as when he writes of "the singular Godwin, the cool transmitter of hot thoughts." That is Godwin to the life—a volume could not say more. He is so full that his compact sentences sometimes have to be worked out like an equation—this, for example: "We feel that Johnson, whose admiration (what there is of it) is of the more value for being extorted, has a sound sense of all that element in Milton, which, if valid, would annihilate the ideas by which Johnson lived; and we feel that this gives value to Johnson's criticisms."

In those few lines there is compressed a sound critical judgment upon both Johnson and Milton.

But Professor Elton is not always restrained. He can give his sentences colour and feeling when there is fit occasion. Here is an admirable passage in his discussion of William Morris:

> "To my apprehension, there is more sheer humanity, more even of an odd cunning psychology, in the prose tales like those of Birdalone, with all their superficial remoteness, than in the long poems. There the people are like people in an arras—like the tapestried huntsman in Matthew Arnold's 'Tristram and Iseult'—and someone is calling upon them to come down out of it and live, and is lifting his magic pipe to do so; but he has forgotten the call, and they look down at him almost pathetically, in their shining dresses, with their large eyes, and they never come. This is not to unsay our praises of the exquisite pattern, the durable stuff, the fastness of the dye. Both kinds of art are good, though one of them is nearer to life. With all such differences, Morris is a great teller, a true follower of Chaucer, and sits near him in some region where there is time for long stories."

The passage is short, but it leaves little unsaid about Morris, the writer of romances.

Professor Elton's four-volumed survey of the century from the Palæo-Georgians to the Victorians is the most wonderful feat of first-hand literary history accomplished in our time. Indeed, it is the best thing of its kind since Warton's "History of Poetry," and as delightful to read as it is profitable to study. The present volume exhibits Professor Elton's fine qualities to great advantage; and if someone doesn't "discover" him, and "boom" him into popularity, I shall despair of the age. I suggest that he should begin to adopt a violent and truculent manner, gabbling hysterically instead of writing decently, and daring all or any to deny that he knows everything about everybody who has ever put pen to paper. That seems to work sometimes.

The volume here produced by the late Professor Raleigh's son is scarcely intended for general circulation—it can hardly mean anything to those who knew nothing of Sir Walter Raleigh's remarkable personality. It shows us a great man at play, fooling gracefully and delightfully. Here are parodies and imitations, and such feats as successive paragraphs written entirely in words of one syllable, two syllables, and so on up to five. The little plays are excellent and the verses delightful. "The Last Will" touches a deeper note and is singularly moving. Some of the pieces are thin, but the best are likely to have a diuturnity of quotation.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

* "A Sheaf of Papers." By Oliver Elton, D.Litt., LL.D. 6s. 6d. (University Press of Liverpool and Hodder & Stoughton.) "Laughter from a Cloud." By Walter Raleigh. With a Foreword by Hilary Raleigh. 21s. (Constable.)

SOCIAL DIAGNOSIS.*

There are lurid writers who compose advertisements for drugs so skilfully that we imagine we have in our miserable bodies all the innumerable diseases which the proffered medicine is guaranteed to cure. Raise the idea into the plane of good literature, and that is somewhat the success that Mr. Masterman has attained in his "England After War." He has analysed all our sensations and symptoms until we groan at the disaster that looms before us. But the all-important end of the drug advertisement is not there—Mr. Masterman has no drugs to sell. Nevertheless, the careful reader will find hints of the cure, and even its methods; although Mr. Masterman starts by expressing the hope that he has been so impartial that no one may guess his political party, or whether he has a party of any kind whatever. Between the lines, if not on them, we can see that Mr. Masterman is still the Liberal politician that he was before the deluge of the Great War. And such being his evident faith, one respects the heroic courage

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with which he chose the motto on his title page: *Nil nisi Divinum stabile est, caetera fumus.*" As he sits on his lofty philosophical mountain, surveying the ruins below, he must ponder sadly that his beloved Liberal Party is not amongst the divine stabilities of life, but rather (for the moment, at least) with those other things that are smoke.

But since he insists that this is a study in medical diagnosis—and not political propaganda—it is only just to put the main emphasis on the analysis, apart from the remedy. Mr. Masterman has given us a striking dissection of "Richford," a London suburb of which only the name is imaginary. It is a vivid piece of realism, this picture of an ant-hill of clerks and their families. "Richford can make nothing with its hands. It has no capacity for sustained thought . . . Richford hates and despises the working classes . . . partly because it has contempt of them and partly because it has fear of them." It is all very clever; as is likewise his analysis of the aristocrats and the hand-workers. Mr. Masterman has a suppressed admiration for those blue-blooded boys of Eton and Harrow, who died so uncomplainingly; but his summing up of the town labourer is altogether unrestrained: "After all, what great gentlemen they are, the working population of the cities." But then follows one of those strange misjudgments which show the limitations of the "Liberal" mind: "How different from the sullen rural population you sometimes find in other lands." That sentence reeks of a political faith that was born in Manchester and Rochdale, and the land of smoke.

Of like kind is that remarkable error where Mr. Masterman says of the middle-class nonentities of Richford: "This good stock—the best in Europe." That sentence puts the chief problems of to-day in very erroneous proportion. It forgets that the peasant is the basis of society.

In spite of so many confirmations that Mr. Masterman's party politics is essentially a limited social creed, he has written a useful book; for the stimulation of political thought is a very urgent necessity. And it is a very readable book; full of apt stories—and one Cabinet tale about Mr. Asquith which ought to become a classic; it certainly reveals that parliamentarian in a very attractive way. The analysis of Wells, Bennett, Galsworthy and Shaw is interesting, and sound—for Mr. Masterman says of the last "probably the greatest of them all." Though perhaps Mr. G. K. Chesterton should contest for the honour of that place. But Mr. Masterman can scarcely be expected to understand Mr. Chesterton; for the doctrines of Manchester and Liberalism have no touch with Mr. Chesterton's social faith.

G. R. STIRLING TAYLOR.

BOATS AND BEAUTY.*

As a maritime nation, asseverating on every possible opportunity that "Britannia rules the waves," we are extraordinarily ignorant of the subject of our pride and our glory. We take this ruling of the waves too much for granted, not pausing to inquire how Britannia has done it and managed to keep on doing it. We are fond of the sea, some of us even enjoy sailing on it, but apart from the handful of amateur sailormen who are to be found in every English city, how many of us have any exact knowledge of the picturesque shipping which while at the seaside we have seen in that mysterious locality known as the "offing"?

We have all been to Brighton, but do we know "Brighton Hoggies" when we see them? Some of us have passed Leigh on the way to Southend and yet returned without any knowledge of a "Leigh Bawley." In other seaports the inhabitants are doubtless more learned, and I suppose any Plymouth man could tell you the difference between a "Hooker" and a "Long Boomer," but London would have to be searched pretty thoroughly before you could find a man able to describe accurately a "Thames Hatch Boat."

Messrs. C. A. Wilkinson and Walter Wood have combined in a very pleasant way to remove our ignorance in these matters. Their book is a fascinating account of the characteristic shipping which may be found in the harbours between the Thames estuary and Land's End. Mr. Wood deals with the fishing-boats of Essex, Kent and the South Coast to Devon and Cornwall, enlivening his account of all these various crafts and the men who work them with entertaining digressions—maybe a yarn of smugglers or all about the oyster industry at Whitstable—but whatever these digressions may be, grave or gay, they all bear directly or indirectly on the author's aim. That aim is "to show something of the human and mechanical means by which the sea is used and conquered in the service of mankind," and in this endeavour he is admirably supported by Mr. Wilkinson, whose woodcuts are not only things of beauty in themselves but careful and faithful records of craft that is fast disappearing.

However convenient and practical steam or motor power may be, we are convinced that neither of them can ever give us objects as beautiful as the "white wings" of our sailing ships. We are grateful to Mr. Wilkinson for showing us in these simple but decorative woodcuts how varied and great is their beauty, how admirably each type is designed and adapted to meet local requirements and becomes itself a work of art by the way in which it expresses its fitness for its purpose. For a young artist, whose career as a wood-engraver has only just begun, Mr. Wilkinson shows a fine sense for the best effects to be got from wood blocks and a considerable knowledge of how to get them. Pictorially the best, I think, is the one he has picked out for his frontispiece, "Cornish Drifters, Looe," in which we see the hill of East Looe rising above the boats in the harbour, while the skilful treatment of the water and sky all adds to our enjoyment of this true and decorative design.

Mr. Wood says "that sail alone is doomed is very probable." If so the world will be the poorer, and artists of the future will realise only by looking at old pictures, prints and drawings that there was a time when a boat seemed a synonym of beauty. But even if sails should disappear from the face of the sea they will live on in their children, because "for the spirit born of sail, which made the British fisherman what he was in the war and what he is to-day"—for this, as Mr. Wood prophetically declares, "there is no death."

In the annals of England there is a word that can never be forgotten, and the children of the future, as those of the present and of the past, will respond to the call of the ages and feel the hereditary thrill whenever a printed page revives the magic of the call, "A sail! a sail!"

FRANK RUTTER.

* "Fishing Boats and Barges." Twenty woodcuts by C. A. Wilkinson. Text by Walter Wood. 12s. 6d. (John Lane.)

THE SILVER AGE.*

It is difficult to make literature of a history of literature. Mr. Doughty almost succeeds. Occasionally he reaches real heights of personal expressiveness, while generally he avoids those classified platitudes which announce the gulf unavoidably fixed between Art and Academia. This is not to say that his book is flawless. He is often diffuse both in analysis and appreciation, but his matter is ripe and for the most part justly presented.

His subject is all in his favour. Modern taste is more tolerant of the vices of the eighteenth century than of the virtues of the nineteenth. It is also singularly devoted to the lyric and singularly convinced that the present too is an age of Reason. Mr. Doughty adopts the conventional title for the period of his review. Nevertheless we think it a misleading title and one which is perhaps least applicable of all to the age which assumed it. The term "Reason"

* "English Lyric in the Age of Reason." By Oswald Doughty, M.A., B.Litt. (Daniel O'Connor.)

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was as much abused by the Augustans as that of "Freedom" by the Romantics, and yet both answer to realities which can and ought to be distinguished from false formulas. The eighteenth century began in logic (than which nothing can be so unreasonable), matured into cynicism and sentiment, and ended in imagination. This liberation can be most clearly traced through the lyrical output of the century, because the lyric, being at first an outcast among the correct disciples of Dryden, attracted to it all the freer spirits of the time. These men do not boast the magisterial manners of a Pope, and so their humble efforts to loosen the self-conscious fetters which bound the feet of poetry have received less than their due. Mr. Doughty redresses the balance, and very finely he discriminates between those who slowly restored to literature a sense of human values.

The Augustans, then, Mr. Doughty isolates in a "citadel of Reason," and his book is the epic of its siege. The metaphor is scarcely exact, for the attack came also from within. Thomson was often an amiable deserter, and the attachment of Gay or of Young, indeed of Pope himself, to "Reason" seems somewhat remote. The truth is that the Augustans served the brain, not reason. Even Mr. Doughty does not sufficiently mark the distinction, as profound as that which divides science and philosophy. "Reason," we have learnt, is something more than common sense. It is not the foe, as the Augustans thought, but the ally of emotion. They had much excuse for their error. Sentiment had begot many inanities among their immediate predecessors, but their own reflective comment, their complacent cult of a decorous mean, is unworthy of the name of "Reason." Thus we find Sir Joshua Reynolds bidding "Reason" (in the sense of logic) preside over Imagination instead of welcoming it as an integral part. But Imagination does not submit to logic, it transcends it. "Reason" is not nature "methodiz'd," but humanised. Mr. Doughty, however, examines with far more subtlety than most of his predecessors the nature of these men. He shows how that curious entity—the spirit of an age—particularly in a period of unadventurous reaction, may dictate to poets not only their conception of life, but also the forms through which they express it. Yet we are glad to find him combating the assumption that the Augustans had no feelings, because convention demanded they should not display them. Strong-headed as they were, their hearts gave them a deal of trouble. Johnson's tenderness, Swift's bitterness, Gray's melancholy, Shenstone's hypochondria, Smart's madness prove it. Everywhere are the symptoms which dog an arbitrary check upon generous impulse. Their poetry might want human significance and weight, might multiply abstractions and capital letters, but as men they suffered for it. They found a cool indifference a poor substitute for disinterested passion. Prior's famous epitaph scarcely does justice to this hidden *desiderium*:

> "Without Love, Hatred, Joy or Fear,
> They led—a kind of—as it were:
> Nor wish'd, nor car'd, nor laugh'd. nor cry'd:
> And so They liv'd: and so They dy'd."

Life, mocking their logic with pain and madness and melancholy, drove them from their citadel, from the coffee-house to the country, from a hard Latinism to Greek, from laboured correctness to simplicity and romance, from porcelain to pensiveness, above all to nature and the gentle moralising which nature provoked. They dare not yet scan the truth of things, but like blind valetudinarians they groped towards sun and air. Cynics gave place to sentimentalists. It was but the turning of the same coin, but it was towards the coming light. Even so late and realistic a poet as Crabbe has only half escaped the darkness. Under the headings of "Disillusion" and "New Ideals" Mr. Doughty traces that lyrical conversion in full detail both critical and biographical. He convinces us of the worth of Parnell, of Shenstone, of Akenside (the admired of Wordsworth) and of the Wartons. Collins' genius is perhaps too slight to bear the weight of his appreciation, but he brings psychology to his study of Gray. There follows the ballad revival, which linked the vernacular to the academic, as in Elizabethan times, and Mr. Doughty rescues those two miracles of forgery, Chatterton's and Macpherson's, from the claws of the philologists and allows us to value them, as how rarely they have been valued, for themselves. The very unreality of these poems taught men to escape from the conventional and accept the strange, so preparing them for the real which is always both strange and familiar. Of Johnson's gloomy and Goldsmith's half-hearted attempt to restore the Augustan dynasty; of Cowper's humanism, that coddled Calvinist in whom Mr. Doughty rather surprisingly finds a latent "man about town"; of Blake's idealism and the sickly sunset of the Silver Age about the Swan of Lichfield, we are given an adequate account. Poetry at last was freed from scholasticism and fashion. Out of the malady of a generation, beauty grew to health and faith unfolded in the hearts of those who created it. Toilsomely man had brought his humanity into harmony with nature; by the end of the century criticism and creation were wed on a higher plane, even though their ideal alliance was fated to be a short one.

Mr. Doughty has given us something more than a reliable textbook. By specialising upon the lyric he has rescued many unassuming poems, such as Thomson's, from the shadow of more monumental works, and if a generous enthusiasm leads him sometimes to exaggerate merit, it is a refreshing quality to find in the writings of a university lecturer.

H. I'A. FAUSSET.

A NOVELIST POET.*

A happy sight it is to see a writer venturing along fresh ways in the infinite world of literature; and most welcome, therefore, is it to find Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith, who has won a place second to none among the practising English novelists, proving herself a poet. Her verse, as presented in this finely produced book, has inspiration, feeling, thought, and an admirable technique, so that, excellent in itself, we may yet look with confidence for future verse from her of the same high character and quality, strengthened. These "Saints in Sussex," although they bear the familiar names of those who walked with Jesus, are not the pale and awkward shadows the historic saints have generally become to the modern world, but, like the jolly little angels climbing among the bells and leaves and blossoms of the title page, have human warmth and a love for the scent of the meadows:

> "Tall tapers are lit for our feast
> In the drooping horse-chestnut boughs;
> And the thrushes serve our Mass
> There in the white thorn hedge,
> Where the bloom is breaking against
> A smudgy, sweet, grey sky
> That shall give us holy water. . . ."

This is nothing more than the love for the Sussex downs, fields, hedges, and waters, which has warmed and animated Miss Kaye-Smith's pen from the beginning, and must indeed have been true of those saints, those agricultural labourers, fishermen and carpenters, who went from their acres and the shallow waters to gather a harvest of souls; pioneers who surely through their ministry had the love of nature as well as of humanity in their hearts:

> "The Saints sup with Thee, there in the dusk and lamplight—
> Mary and Joseph and Peter and all my friends—
> With faces propped on their tired and toil-worn fingers
> And kind eyes full of the peace of the journey's end."

As our poet appeals to the religiousness of the reader, as well as to his love of verse, there will necessarily be differences of opinion as to the quality of the various poems; but I have found those in which Nature is predominant to be the most acceptable. Dare I venture to suggest that it would have been well if in every case Miss Kaye-Smith had used the bell-music of rime? There are, of course, occasions elsewhere when the trammels of like-endings are a hindrance and the poet's emotion or message would only

* "Saints in Sussex." By Sheila Kaye-Smith. 2s. (Elkin Mathews.)

be hurt by their jingle and restrictions; but assuredly the melody of the verse of this book would have been helped by them.

And if for this conservative pronouncement the poets and poetasters who wallow in *vers-libre*—generally because it is the one method possible to the incompetent—should empty their tinpots of wrath upon me, I shall merely put up my widest umbrella and re-read this book, which reflects in its pages the freshness and inspiration that encourage and console.

C. E. LAWRENCE.

"ATHENIAN ABERDEEN."*

It is sixty-three years since Lord Aberdeen died, and full justice has not until now been done to his memory and achievements. Many years ago there was a monograph in the "Queen's Prime Ministers" series, which was an abridgment of a Life privately printed but never published; but now Lady Frances Balfour has written a full-dress biography in which she gives an admirable portrait of the statesman.

Lord Aberdeen was more than a statesman, for he was a many-sided man. In his youth he went to Greece, where he rediscovered and excavated the Pnyx and afterwards founded the Athenian Club. The value of his researches are shown by the fact that he was elected President of the Society of Antiquaries in 1812 and held that office for thirty-four years. When he came of age he went to Haddo Hall to take possession of his estates, and he found his lands in a shocking state. He spent much thought and time and money on their improvement, and it is put on record that in all he expended £60,000 on buildings, roads, draining and planting.

"It will make me truly happy to see you," he wrote from Haddo in 1809 to a friend, "but alas! this is not my Paradaize: this is not the Vall' Ombrosa of which you have heard so much, but a real Siberian waste. Far as the eye can reach no tree is seen. 'Earth clad in russet scorns the lively green.' The desolation of the exterior is only equalled by the appalling badness of the house. We will contrive, however, to despise these matters. If the storm rages we will sit close in the Old Library. I'll broach ye a pipe of Malvosie and bring pasties of the doe! In short, do all that is possible to make you forget the frozen latitude in which we are placed. I go to-morrow to visit a brother Kamskatchan."

The severe task of putting his house in order by no means exhausted Lord Aberdeen's energies, and he threw himself zealously into public life. He was a Scotch representative peer from 1806 to 1814, when he was created Viscount Gordon of the United Kingdom and could sit there in his own right. Castlereagh sent him as Ambassador to Vienna in 1813, and in the following year he was one of the British representatives at the Congress of Châtillon. He took office under Wellington as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster early in 1828, and a few months later became Foreign Secretary. He served under Peel—in 1834 at the Colonial Office, and in Peel's second administration went back to the Foreign Office, where between 1841 and 1846 he did excellent work in improving the relations between France and Great Britain. In 1852 he was invited to form a ministry—the coalition ministry of Whigs and Peelites—and had in his Cabinet Palmerston, Gladstone and Lord John Russell, and it was while he was still in power that the country was plunged into the Crimean War.

This book gives us for the first time an inside view of Lord Aberdeen, and we are shown a man who put his country first, his tenantry second and himself nowhere. A man of strong will and unimpeachable honour in politics, and a charming companion, at once learned and humorous. As Gladstone wrote of him, his principal characteristics were: "mental calmness; the absence (if for want of better words I may describe it by a negative) of all egotism; the love of exact justice; a thorough tolerance of spirit; and last, and most of all, an entire absence of suspicion."

LEWIS MELVILLE.

* "The Life of George, Fourth Earl of Aberdeen, K.G., K.T. By Lady Frances Balfour, LL.D., D.Litt. 2 vols. 42s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

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LAST DAYS OF TOLSTOY.*

Anton Tchekhov, speaking during Tolstoy's lifetime to Maxim Gorky of the lack of record that was being kept of the Count's thoughts and sayings, complained: "That, my dear fellow, is intolerably Russian. After his death they will bestir themselves, will begin to write reminiscences and will lie." Vladimir Tchertkoff would agree with Tchekhov. He talks in the preface to the present volume of the "unreliable documents" used in some of the recent biographies, and of the "shameless slander" which depicts Tolstoy's personality "in a totally perverted manner." He then proceeds to give his version of the truth. From his enjoyment of Tolstoy's friendship and confidence he had unequalled opportunities for knowing the facts. In 1910 he was made executor of the will by which the Count left all his writings free to the public. The breach between Tchertkoff and Tolstoy's wife, already much strained, was widened to breaking point by this act. Sofya Andreyevna Tolstoy died in 1919, and with her death Tchertkoff felt that the chief obstacle to revealing the true causes of her husband's going away from Yasnaya Polyana was removed.

From the Count's talk, letters and private diaries Tchertkoff draws his picture of the last days, explaining how the home life that had been a strain for thirty years had become unbearable by 1910. He does not spare Sofya Andreyevna. But whether it is that he protests too much or whether we feel that the truth never lies at one extreme, we set aside the volume with a strong desire to hear the lady's side. Tchertkoff would have made his points the more easily had he been less vehement. This thought influences our opinion of the author; it does not damage the value of the facts from which he starts. His book is one which cannot be neglected by the future biographer or by the private student of Tolstoy's life.

V. E. W.

VILLAS OF FLORENCE AND TUSCANY.†

Mr. Eberlein has made a wonderful study of Villas of Florence and Tuscany, and has collected much information. His book is illustrated richly by many photographs, all exquisitely produced on smooth paper. The price is three guineas net, and the book is fully worth it; a thing to rejoice over, to ponder slowly.

"The average visitor to Florence and other parts of Tuscany sees the stock sights, and a few of the surrounding villas that are admittedly show-places," writes Mr. Eberlein. ". . . After viewing these, he goes away, little dreaming of the many delights hidden behind the high walls that line the roads he has traversed in his comings and goings, . . . the other villas, and especially the smaller villas, where a more intimate character has been preserved, afford an invaluable index to the very heart of Tuscany."

We have here presented a certain number of representative villas, thoroughly considered in all their characteristic details, with a complete illustrative record. Cigliano is an excellent example of the early Renaissance Tuscan villa. It stands near the little town of San Casciano. We are given a very definite impression of its loveliness—the stuccoed walls of the house of that indescribable Tuscan villa colour, as elusive as the hues of the sunset clouds; the rose-beds, edged with strawberry plants, the fountain in the wall of the lemon house. There is a glowing account of the Villa Pazzi (on the top of the hill, just above Pian de Giullari). "Its utter simplicity is its most alluring trait. To put it in the words of a visiting architect we once took there: 'There is so damned little architecture about it that it is bound to be good.'" The photograph of "South Front and Terrace" is enchanting.

We have careful chapters on the Tuscan Villa before and during the sixteenth century, also during the seventeenth century, and a fine section on decoration and furnishing, in which the author begs us to remember that high and straight-backed arm-chairs are not uncomfortable if used with foostools, as intended. We thank the writer for a supremely beautiful volume. His idea of providing photographs of every aspect of a villa enables us to construct it, till it lives before our eyes.

C. M.

Fire-place in Dining-room, La Pietra.
From "Villas of Florence and Tuscany" (Lippincott).

GOOD MEN AND TRUE.*

In his preface to "Men, Maids and Mustard-pot," Gilbert Frankau talks of "the delusion common to publishers, that books of short stories do not interest the public." I suspect that this particular delusion must be yielding, as saith the wise man, to the logic of facts. At any rate, here are several books, each as different from the other as they can possibly be, with the exception that they all consist of short stories.

Moreover, every friend I have that is a writer seems to have had a book of short stories accepted by his publisher, and this season should bring a heavy crop—more shorts than longs—to harvest.

It is only natural that in these days of haste and speeding up, people should prefer a tale they can read in an hour, to one they must continually be putting down while they attend to other business. The magazines have prepared the way, but their stories are too stereotyped for all tastes; and readers are asking for tales with more

* "The Last Days of Tolstoy." By Vladimir Tchertkoff. 7s. 6d. net. (Heinemann.)

† "Villas of Florence and Tuscany." By Harold Donaldson Eberlein. £3 3s. (Lippincott.)

* "The Tale of a Manor." By Selma Lagerlöf. (Werner Laurie.)—"Fiery Particles." By C. E. Montague. (Chatto & Windus.)—"Men, Maids and Mustard-pot." By Gilbert Frankau. (Hutchinson.)—"The Nine of Hearts." By E. Colburn Mayne. (Constable.)—"Little Life Stories." By Sir Harry Johnston. (Chatto & Windus.) 7s. 6d. each.

quality. Demand creates supply, and here is the advance guard of the army of short stories which is on its gallant way to us.

When I began "The Nine of Hearts" I thought, "At last Miss Colburn Mayne is doing herself justice." Hitherto her stories have so often been too thin, too fine-drawn, of too hot-house a variety; but here were stories that had an air of reality. As to the art of Miss Mayne's work, of that there could at no time be any question; but I have often doubted her knowledge of life, her *flair*. The observer cannot but feel that exotic plants would be different if seen in their natural surroundings of torrid swamp and jungle, different from what they appeared when shut into an English conservatory. "The Nine of Hearts," however, is written with insight and simplicity—some of it, most of it. "The Interlude for Death" is a wonderful piece of work, so is "Peacocks," and even "Gold Hair." In a meal of many courses it is foolish to expect each to be of an equal excellence, but it seemed a pity Miss Mayne should have included "Light" in her selected tales. A study of disease is of interest if treated frankly as disease. It loses its value to the psychologist if dealt with in any other way.

It was a relief to turn from the unpleasant sentimentality of "Light" to the more robust work of Sir Harry Johnston. Here was less art, less atmosphere, but an outdoor wholesomeness and simplicity. "Life's Little Stories" were of a comfortable probability. You felt that most of them had happened, that they were, in the main, experiences that have been turned into stories. The abnormal, the unhealthy, does not appeal to Sir Harry's perspicacious mind. Instead he gives us excellent narratives, such as "Frederick's Remorse," "Mrs. Doubleday," "The Rev. D. Macauley." All the tales are not on as high a level, in fact the "Pituitary Gland" and "Good-night, Old Man!" are not superior to the usual magazine tale. Nevertheless, when the chaff has been winnowed away, so much grain remains that we cannot but hope Sir Harry will continue to tell us tales of the things he has seen and experienced, will give us more of "life's little stories."

In "Fiery Particles" is a yarn—that is its author's name for it—which, except for its rather inconclusive end, is the finest I have read for years. The fine paragraphs with their Irish tang come rolling along, catching you with their magic, holding you spellbound:

> "You paid your rent if you could; for the coat that the old colonel had on his back—and he never out of the township—was that worn you'd be sorry. Suppose you hadn't the cash, still you were not 'put out of it.' All that you'd have to suffer was that good man buzzing about your holding wanting to help; he would be all of a fidget trying to call to mind the way some heathen Dane, that he had known when a boy, used to be-devil salt butter back into fresh—that, or how Montenegrins would fatten a pig on any wisp of old trash that would come blowing down the high road. A kind man, though he never got quit of the queer dream he had that he knew how to farm."

Last time a book by Mr. Montague was put into my hands I knew it for clever, but it was filled with a sort of preaching, and I wondered why he must do that when he might just be talking, telling us in stories the things about "the race's old pursuits of love, war and the chase," that we all wanted to know. I need not have troubled about it, for here are the stories I was seeking—a book that flashes all over with its fiery particles, like a field with glow-worms in the mating month. Not that they are all as good as "Another Temple Gone." "My Friend the Swan" is arid stuff, and "Apropos des Bottes" little better. But for what I have received in that one story of an Irish township and its illicit still there is no need for anyone to make me "truly thankful." I will go round the world telling the folks to read, mark, and the young writers to learn from it, for it is a beautiful and a satisfying tale.

The name of Selma Lagerlöf has a sound of magic, but the stories chosen for "The Tale of a Manor" do not represent her fairly. She has to a remarkable degree the power of putting a Scandinavian atmosphere into her books. The landscape, the people, the events are not universal but Swedish. "The Girl of the Marsh Croft,"

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XUM

he novel of hers which is best known in England, has this quality to perfection; but the same cannot be said for "The Tale of a Manor." A poor story, vaguely told, it has not the fascination of her longer tales. Occupying more than half the book, it is followed by some shorter tales which, on the whole, are more interesting and yet not interesting enough to make them worthy of translation.

Beginning with Gilbert Frankau, we find ourselves back at his book of jolly, rattling tales, "Men, Maids, and Mustard-pot." I see for it the popularity that such a book deserves. Mr. Frankau writes the sort of story that interests us all. We read, not for the art, but for the life in it, just as some years ago we used to read the books of his mother—Frank Danby. Wise in his day as was she in hers, he represents her to the present generation; and it is grateful to him—a gratitude it shows—for surcease of boredom and ennui. His are stories you cannot put down till you have read to the end.

C. A. DAWSON-SCOTT.

KEATS AND A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.*

Mr. Hugh Fausset's study of Keats has the very great merit of provoking discussion; it is as little of a soporific as can be imagined. If his Keats is not the reader's it will only be after a good deal of reflection, and the distinguishing of one aspect from another, that that conclusion is reached; and accordingly his book is to be welcomed even by dissenting voices, since mere traditionalists such as the present reviewer are thrown back on their last resources and compelled to examine anew a familiar position.

"Keats: a Study in Development," is the full title of this volume, which represents an attempt "to trace the steps by which the poet defined and purified his perception both of life and of art." The quotation is from the first sentence of the foreword; the last sentences are (the reference is to the revised "Hyperion"), "It is the story of a soul discovering itself through the senses, of a mind adjusting its powers to balance the energy and greed of the appetites. In that balance Keats realised the central truth of life. He put himself into harmony with the creative mind of the universe, he entered the Kingdom of Heaven; his human soul in its passionate love rose above the elements of force and the frailty of the flesh. In such a balance lies the only hope of the world."

Mr. Fausset regards Keats boldly and all but exclusively as a philosopher, saying that a philosophy of life is the whole concern of a great poet; a hard saying truly, and one which it might seem easy to upset by the simple trick of naming names. But forbearing or deferring that trick, which is hardly conclusive, let us merely say that there is a fundamental error in this position, the error of confusing creation with interpretation. Poetry creates, philosophy interprets, and though it may not be hard to refine away a broad distinction of this kind, it yet corresponds to a common recognition of an original difference. Mr. Fausset holds that without a philosophy of life a great poet can but weave patterns and twitter like a bird; and once again we dissent vehemently. I do not know what Shakespeare's philosophy of life was, or Chaucer's, or even Milton's, though Milton was a good deal concerned with the moral aspect of the world. Shall we ask for stones when they give us bread? A modern poet, Flecker, has told us that the business of poetry is not to save men's souls but to make them worth saving. A purely agnostic attitude upon these profounder questions may seem, and may well be, merely superficial; yet how hard it is to define precisely the business of poetry. Mr. Fausset's assertion of the supremacy of philosophy seems a dangerous assertion; in the shadow of that grim and serious sister, poor poetry can but shrivel, and will die, maybe, before philosophy herself is dead. We all talk and talk endlessly of Mr. Hardy's philosophy; we shall be admiring the poetry when the philosophy is dead. Will the philosophy befriend the poetry? Posterity is a hasty and heedless young person and, to take another example, it may be that she will care less for the darker poems in Mr. de la Mare's "The Veil" than for the thoughtless verses of "Peacock Pie." Our poets are turning philosophers—willy-nilly perhaps; a sick time makes thought sick and imagination falters; from creation they turn to interpretation, and leave us as sad and bewildered as they are themselves. Well may the best of them cry out, "Sweet poesy, why art thou dumb?" and to use another of his phrases, it is poetry that is seen in the clutch of philosophy:

> "Not far from where I stood,
> Dragging the corn by her golden hair
> Into a dark and lonely wood."

Let us return to Keats now, and say that there is an irreconcilable difference between the modern critics, represented so admirably by Mr. Fausset, and the traditionalists who go to poetry for anything and everything except a philosophy of life. And leaving this aside there is still much to consider, for the attitude of our author exposes him to such extravagances as:

> "In 'Hyperion' Keats had discovered and imperfectly voiced one profound truth. He had realised that nature offers a varied spectacle of forces, not merely to be enjoyed or passively reflected by a poet, but to be used by an inspired intelligence for the creation of unadulterated beauty in perpetual harmony with the soul of man, because it satisfies his rational as well as his sensuous perception. Nature he had discovered to be as disinterestedly destructive as creative. He had foreseen the Darwinian hypothesis. But he had denied its application to men."

And elsewhere, in speaking of Saturn, who "is conscious of the evils of sensation, without having the power to set them right," he says:

> "Saturn's dilemma is that of the sensationalist in a world of imperfectly realised intellectual values, of the body in the audit chamber of the mind; he approaches a reflection of Keats himself when on the full stream of his instinct he floated through Endymion."

Brilliant subtleties of this sort abound, and they would be irresistible if their relation to circumstance were even a little more tangible. Grant that Keats was a philosopher, as fully developed in his conscious thought and his grasp upon the mysteries and evils of the world as he was in his apprehension of the beauty of life, grant this and the rest follows; but it is too much to grant. Keats was but twenty-five when he died, and does not show the steady development of thought which the argument asserts or implies. He wrote and rewrote "Hyperion," and it remains marvellous, a joy for ever, at once a problem and a satisfaction; but almost at the same time he was writing also his worst poetry out of wholly undelightful visions. On the other hand, and plainly supporting our author's contention, there are many strange and powerful lines among those "to Fanny" which are in harmony with the finest of the revised "Hyperion." A long series of questions springs from the contrasting verses of the same period, and Mr. Fausset may be able to answer them; his book is too short for his theme. But brevity is an amiable defect, which his readers will at times resent and at times forgive.

JOHN FREEMAN.

* "Keats: a Study in Development." By Hugh I'Anson Fausset. 6s. (Secker.)

SIR WILLIAM WATSON'S POEMS.*

Poets are commonly believed to be incompetent to adjudge their own poems. The belief is a superstition. For a poem from the moment of its conception is a product of a process of selection and rejection; and a poet Spartan enough—as every true poet must be—to expose his own progeny on Mount Taygetus, must surely be critic enough to select the best of the survivors for Mount Parnassus.

Certainly Sir William Watson's selection gives proof of the impartiality of his paternal pride. We may emphatically dissent from ninety per cent. of his rejections; but with ninety per cent, of his selections we must cordially agree; and that is about as near unanimity as two critics

* "A Hundred Poems." By Sir William Watson. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

are likely to attain. With such a poem as "The Winter Sleep" we might comfortably dispense, and the absence of such a poem as that "To Arthur Christopher Benson" we may deeply deplore; but, taken all in all, the selection seems just and satisfactory, and suffices to show the consistently high quality of the poet's work.

All the poems in the collection are worthy of a great poet: all have dignity: all have distinction. In the poet's singing mantle there are no purple patches; it is purple from "clasp to hem," from head to heel. All his altars are of marble, all his offerings of shining silver and beaten gold. If some of his peaks outsoar Mount Everest there are none lower than Parnassus. We can hardly realise the ascension of his art, for it has no declensions; it is not a mountain but a sierra. One might indeed complain of a monotony of perfection and of radiance. One might even complain that too many of his peaks are above snow line.

It is perhaps Sir William's unrelenting loftiness and punctilious perfection that have limited his appeal and restricted his audience. He has no contrasts; there is no darkness to make his light visible, there are no depths against which to measure his peaks, no gilt to compare with his gold, no stucco to enhance his marble. "In a naughty world" it is possible to shine too steadily, and a patrician dignity and serenity of deportment and demeanour do not make for popularity in a democratic community. It is an age of heat, and haste, and noise, unfitting most of us for high discourse. Men, tired and dusty, feel out of place in marble temples; and men clad in starched shirts and dinner jackets rather resent a poet in a purple toga; they are apt to mistake pomp for pompousness, stateliness for pose, austerity for frigidity, and magniloquence for grandiloquence.

Grandiloquence is one of the few definite charges brought against him. It is a futile accusation. He is not grandiloquent but magniloquent; there is no affectation in his sonorous periods; they are the inevitable utterance, the natural speech of a noble and stately spirit which has had lifelong converse with the great, which has marched in time to the music of the spheres, which has taken its accent from the surge of deep emotions, which has known the solitude of mountain-peaks and the "loneliness of wings."

Sir William Watson would be more popular if he were less great; he might be more lovable if he were less marmorean and immaculate; he might have a larger audience if he danced to the tambourine or jazzed to the jazz band; he might win more applause if he mixed some ragtime with his oratorio; but he has never pandered to the mob, he has been true to his high calling as a priest to his vows, and if he has missed some pleasant popularity he has gained a sure and certain immortality.

No lover of poetry can read such a poem as "The Coronation Ode," "Lacrimae Musarum," "The Unknown God," "The Father of the Forest," "The Hope of the World," without feeling that here is a consummate artist—an artist whose art is the sincere and inevitable expression of a life "in splendour clothed of dedicated days"—a life that has been continually spent on high intellectual and spiritual levels.

Like every other great poet, William Watson has his own special audience; but even those who are not attuned to his poetry can hardly fail to recognise that it has emotional force, moral dignity, intellectual lucidity, spiritual radiancy, and æsthetic beauty. It is strange that his contemporaries do not yet fully appreciate his greatness.

RONALD CAMPBELL MACFIE.

THE OTHER END.*

There is said to be joy among authors when a critic writes a novel or a book of short stories. "Now," they say in their hearts, "he will give himself away." It is easy for him to point out the flaws in our art and tell us how to do it, but he will not find it so easy to demonstrate

* "The Other End." By R. Ellis Roberts. 7s. 6d. (Cecil Palmer.)

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how it ought to be done." Any such joy will, in this case, be short-lived, for " The Other End " proves that Mr. Ellis Roberts is as well able to write stories of his own as to criticise those of others. Here, moreover, he has set his hand to a kind of story-telling that is not often practised successfully and achieved a mastery, at times, over the grim, the terrible, the eerie, the bizarre, over the fine, elusive mysteries of the spirit, that challenges comparison with Poe and Hawthorne.

For all the uncanny air that enfolds these stories, the supernatural elements in them are so quietly taken for granted, and are blended with so much of everyday circumstance that even their unrealities are made to seem curiously real. Mr. Roberts paints you a conventional, smiling English landscape, then by gradual, subtle wizardries touches it with secret, twilight terrors. He finds the gods of ancient Rome still haunting the English countryside where their altars and temples had stood; finds the altar magically re-erected, the sacred fire burning on the lonely hill in the deep of the night, and a strange worshipper, who had seemed by day an ordinary herd-boy, offering up sacrifice; finds the gods themselves returning to influence mysteriously, tragically, the lives of present-day men and women.

In " The Great Mother," Hugh Flinders asks his friend: " Would it surprise you to know that the old worship goes on? That hills near here are still sacred to Apollo? That groves are still dedicated to Diana, and woods to Pan? I don't mean stupid revivals like old Taylor's: I mean survivals of the old faith among the old people—people to whom Christ and the saints are less direct of access than earth-stained Pan, gross Priapus, or even Jupiter of the storm. For months now I have resisted and I can resist no longer. I am going to the grove tonight; and I should like you to come too, if you will. Will you? " The amazing happenings that night at the grove—the baffling disappearance of Hugh, the rush of frenzied dancers, with nothing to be heard but the swift padding of many feet, and nothing seen but the long, rank grass beaten down as by a storm of hailstones—the whole thing, with its matter-of-fact ending, which leaves the wonder unexplained, is done with an art, an imaginative cunning that is rare in modern fiction.

These occult influences of the ancient world are potent in " The Hill," the piteous tragedy of " The Other End," " The Wind," " Under the Sun," and other of the tales; but it is a different wizardry that is practised by the saintly priest, Lascelles, in " The Narrow Way," another sort of spirit that haunts the high road in " The Cage." Any summary of the stories would misrepresent them; they depend so much for their effectiveness on the atmosphere in which they are steeped, on little details of character and incident that, subtly touched into them, subdue the reader to a belief in their bizarre happenings. Some are edged with a delicate irony, or have charm as well as mystery and terror; the best show a power of fantasy and a deftness of finish which seem to indicate that Mr. Ellis Roberts has too long given to criticism what was meant for imaginative literature.

A. R.

WHAT THE JUDGE THOUGHT.*

Readers of " Dorothy Osborne's Letters " and " What the Judge Saw " need no further introduction to His Honour Judge Parry; they have met him before and found him a shrewd and genial acquaintance, with a fund of fresh, lively stories on hand. Whether the majority of his legal brethren have a sense of humour broad and deep enough to relish the fun-poking directed against a dignified and learned profession is at least doubtful. Onlookers see most of the game, but here is one—a player himself—who knows the weaknesses and injustices of the rules, their unreasonableness, absurdities and abuses, and is not afraid that some of his colleagues may cold shoulder him for lacking *esprit de corps*.

Amateurs of advocacy will discover much to interest them in the short biographies given of O'Connell, Rufus Choate, Mr. Justice Maule and Abraham Lincoln, whose career as an advocate has never before been stressed, so far as we know, though it occupied the best years of his life, from 1836 to 1860. Though the chapter headings may sound a little abstruse to the general reader, the greater part of the subject matter is far from being so. The chapter " Concerning the Law of the Lost Golf Ball " is what the man in the street would call " a perfect scream "; it is warranted to keep a more refined reader shaking with silent laughter from beginning to end. Scarcely less clever and amusing are those on " The Future of Portia " and " Jumbo in Chancery."

Judge Parry is eager for legal reform. Justice is supposed to be free as air, but those who wax indignant on the cost of litigation to the poor and the avarice of lawyers will find enough favourable evidence here to keep them talking for a week. In Chapter III, " Concerning Legal Out-Patients," it is suggested that lawyers might give voluntary legal assistance to the poor, as do the doctors:

> " What would be more likely to endear lawyers to the hearts of the people than to see a Simon or a Marshall Hall in a crowded room in the Borough, studying the legal ailments of the patients of the district, prescribing affidavits and interrogatories, and lecturing to a band of devoted students how justice might be administered to these poor persons."

The Courts of Conciliation which exist in Denmark, Scandinavia, Italy and France are described, and striking figures given showing their results in money, economy and conciliation. The book is full of human interest, sometimes poignant. In a few brilliant strokes Judge Parry puts before us those dramatic episodes of court life that make attendance at public trials so valuable to the playwright and actor. " What the Judge Thought " may be guaranteed to give hours of enjoyment to any reader.

* " What the Judge Thought." By His Honour Judge Edward Abbott Parry. 21s. (Fisher Unwin.)

PILGRIM'S REST.*

Mr. Brett Young has laid his story in Johannesburg, in the phase which might be described as between the wars, and during the strike. The theme is the impact of the pioneer type on the more elaborate mechanised civilisation that succeeds him. Hayman has been a prospector, a pioneer. His weaknesses are those of primitive society. He has " no use for anything a man can't get off his own bat." Having been one of the earlier diggers in Johannesburg, he returns when Johannesburg has become a modern industrial centre, with safety regulations in the mines, massed capital, massed labour, massed prosperity and herded squalor. He cannot do with it. He cannot see why he should modify his pace of work to the pace of other men. He cannot see why he should be forbidden to take a risk if the risk is his own. He despises the noisy, bewildered destructiveness of the Union leaders, and both he and Mr. Brett Young have only a momentary perception that the particular kind of squalor and degradation practically forced on the working population of the mines is certain to produce, sooner or later, the particular kind of explosion that occurs. It is, in short, not peculiarly a South African problem (though the description of South African scenery, light and casual higgledy-piggledy construction, is brilliantly done). It is the same problem as is perplexing England, America, Italy, anywhere in fact where there is an industrial life at all, where huge masses of men on whose incessant industry and efficiency the whole thing depends, have begun to declare their lives not good enough; and those directing industry are shirking the question of how they can be made good enough.

Hayman does not really solve the question. He merely emigrates to a more primitive goldfield, his wilder dreams of making a huge fortune in an undiscovered region fading away before the concrete image of a woman he really

* " Pilgrim's Rest." By F. Brett Young. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

loves and work he can really do. The whole story is well and vividly written, and the bewildering variety of type—the Neapolitans who run the questionable hotel, the feverish, lung-stricken agitators, the simple if rather brutal loyalty of the native "first boy," the uncertainty of the impoverished Boers driven from the farm life they were bred in into the industrial life for which they are unprepared both in mind and ethics, the three women maintaining their refined and civilised home in the midst of all the poverty and chaos, are all etched in with a sure hand. You would know each of them if they came into the room.

L. MASTERMAN.

THE POETIC MIND.*

Here at last is a sound, comprehensive and prosaic account of the nature of poetic thought. Mr. Prescott's book is on the right lines both as to exposition, which is admirably plain, and also because the author boldly and consistently acts upon the intention announced in the introduction—"to use quotations often as the best possible evidence . . . rather than present novel theories," and "correlate views—often by the poets—about poetry."

The evidence gathered by Mr. Prescott is primarily intended to support the following argument. Poetry is something magical, mysterious, because it is the fruit of dream born in unconscious mind. If there be any such thing as poetry which is the result merely of conscious thought, it contains nothing needing explanation. What we mean by "pure" poetry is certainly dream stuff or vision, though some degree of conscious thinking enters into most poems. Poetic dreaming is akin to the unreasoning thought of children and savages and is, historically, older than the conscious operation of scientific reason. Also it is preoccupied with the half known and the unknown. The unconscious mind is "on the whole superior in insight and wisdom to the conscious," and "the poet has the power of utilising this unconscious material." The necessary initial impulse to poetry comes from emotion, and this emotion is generated in the deep, unsatisfied desires of the individual. Self-expression in poetry is thus, as Aristotle said, a purge for the individual mind. Not only does poetry purge the mind of repressed wishes but, as Bacon said in "The Advancement of Learning," its use has also been "to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it." The answer to those, like Lombroso and Nordau, who regard the "poetic madness" (and poetic inspiration must be the result of poetic madness) as the same thing as insanity, and the genius as a degenerate, is that they reason illogically, without having first established a standard by which to judge what is and is not mentally healthy. The poet is certainly abnormal; he is for one thing extraordinarily sensitive to impressions; but Myer's claim that the genius is "progenerate" rather than degenerate, is worthy of scientific consideration. Although there is no conclusive evidence that poetic madness is pathological, it probably includes a tendency to become aggravated into a pathological condition similar to that of the neurotic or the lunatic. The poet relieves himself in poetry. Shakespeare, "if not mad, prevents madness by writing 'Hamlet.'" Since all humanity nurses unconscious desires and aspirations, readers of poetry are struck rather by the revelation therein of their own thoughts than of the thoughts of the writer. Thus poetry has a further use, a very important use for the world.

* "The Poetic Mind." By F. C. Prescott (Cornell University). 9s. (Macmillan.)

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"This is the finished article I wrote at your request. I sent it to the 'Daily News' (whose Editor accepted it) in the interval of preparing this lesson. They have printed quite a number of short articles I have sent them since beginning this Course."—E. P Dalton. 12.5.22.

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" Men are fatigued by the business of life, preyed upon by unpleasant feelings, under a tension that requires relaxation. They read a novel or go to a play and find supplied in fiction what is wanting in reality. They feel what Keble calls the *vis medica poeticae*, and after living in this imaginary world they

' With peace and consolation are dismissed
And calm of mind, all passion spent.' "

Mr. Prescott at this point approaches dangerously near to a confusion of unconscious mind with poetry which is its creative expression.

I do not doubt that Mr. Charles Garvice's unconscious mind wrote most of his novels, and that his novels sent many a reader away

" With peace and consolation " ;

but were Mr. Garvice's novels poetry? No. Why? One may agree with Mr. Prescott that true poetry may occur not only in verse, " but also in the prose of our translation of the Psalms, in the ' Leaves of Grass,' in the ' vers libre ' and in . . . many a prose passage." Why then are Garvice novels, which certainly purge unsatisfied wishes, not true poetry? Prescott knows (he seems to know every secret of the poet), although at times, doubtless owing to gaps in his argument, he seems to be on the verge of self-contradiction. In a valuable chapter on " The Uses of Poetry " he considers the prophetic and mantic character that has always been ascribed to it as also to dreams:

" The oracles of poetry come from an unconscious visionary thought tending to transcend time and space. The poetic vision sees a future event symbolically as already present; it sees it indeed without time; it cannot therefore establish dates according to our ordinary calendar . . . The range of the poetic prophecy is as great as that of human desire or aspiration. There is no marvel if it tells ' the flowing fortunes of a thousand years.' "

In other words the dream symbolism of poetry is the creation not only of buried desires but of constructive imagination which is giving shape to the aspirations and tendencies of the human race. A Charles Garvice novel (and also of course three-quarters of the fiction that is written) may be a more or less efficient means of externalising the mundane wishes of readers; but to be prophetic, that is poetic, fiction (in prose or in verse) must express intimations of worlds not realised; for man is a spiritual creature imprisoned by finite phenomena in an infinite universe. Prophetic poetry may be simple; it need not be " cosmic " in subject, but only in suggestion. It must point out things that we know subconsciously or intuitively, such as that you cannot pick a daisy without troubling of a star; that flowers breathe and enjoy the air; that the Kingdom of God is within you.

" A great poet is great partly for this reason, that his writings give some shadow of satisfaction to the desires of all men. And what all men desire they strive earnestly to obtain, and will obtain eventually. . . . This desire . . . arises from the present reality and reflects the coming one. *By a pre-established harmony it looks toward that universal or purified or perfected nature of which Aristotle speaks.* ' The desire of all nations shall come.' As Lowell says:

' The dreams which nations dream come true
And shape the world anew.' "

Thus is Christ the greatest poet and prophet of all, and thus are all the true poets " the legislators of the world."

It will be seen from this most inadequate résumé of Mr. Prescott's important book that many gaps in the argument remain to be filled in. Some of these are due to the necessary limitation of space in this review; others are due to Mr. Prescott's similar limitations. I do not think any reader of " The Poetic Mind " will find in the author limitations of understanding. He understands well enough to go to the poets and seers for their conclusions first, accepting these conclusions, which all reinforce one another, as the premises of his rational argument.

R. L. MÉGROZ.

Novel Notes.

THE ORISSERS. By L. H. Myers. 7s. 6d. (Putnams.)

In its subtle way this book is a little masterpiece—but one that will appeal to the few, as is the manner of masterpieces in any art. No plot can be extracted from it for the review-reader's benefit; it is just such a story of motives, of intrigue, of watchers and commentators and expert mental analysts as Henry James would have accepted with joyful pains. Nevertheless it deals with very real people and with the concrete, in so far as the possession of an estate and certain worldly goods forms one theme, and the development of this part of the shadow-play is astonishingly well carried through. There are scenes which give an eerie, shivery impression, as though one watched a company of ghosts at their conversations and machinations; and there are people who are triumphs of uncanny insight. The fiendish Cosmo, with his half-demented enmity against the world; the suave, normal Standish, bewildered and baffled when the line of life diverges from the expected path; the scheming Madeline; the introspective Nicholas; the massive, sardonic John Mayne—and others—all are wonderfully drawn. But so skilled and subtle a writer demands for full appreciation a skilled and abnormal reader; therefore this novel is for the few, for the elect. They will value it; those who want a story for a railway journey will be impatient with its troubled beauty.

LOBSTER SALAD. By Lynn Doyle. 7s. 6d. (Duckworth.)

Few people would gather from the title of this volume any idea of the character of its contents, though those familiar with the earlier books of Mr. Lynn Doyle would doubtless make a shrewd guess. It is indeed a fresh gathering of stories concerning the good folks of Ballygullion, and the title, somewhat misleadingly perhaps given to the whole collection, is that of the first story, in which a lobster plays its effective part. That same first story, by the way, suggests something of a revival of the kind of Irish fiction of which " Handy Andy " was one of the most popular examples some years ago; and a somewhat similar character of humorous exaggeration marks " A Wild Goose Chase," by Mr. Lynn Doyle. His humour is not always of that kind; at times it is subtler, as in " Public Action," where the acquisitive man over-reaches himself, and in his attempt to get a neighbour's farm below its value is made to pay far beyond it. It is the Ireland of whisky-drinking country folk, of quaint " characters " and racy talk that we get in these further stories recalled by Mr. Patrick Murphy of Ballygullion, and skilfully set down by Mr. Lynn Doyle.

LAND OF MOONSHINE. By Mary L. Pendered. 7s. 6d. (Leonard Parsons.)

How many of us, I wonder, have longed to possess a real old country inn converted into a dwelling-place? It is true that these days many of us would be content with far less romantic and picturesque quarters if we could get them! But there is a fascination about an old inn that makes it especially desirable, and most of us will envy Valentine Prescott, whose quiet, yet charming story forms the theme of Miss Mary L. Pendered's latest novel. " Land of Moonshine " is not for readers who hanker after sensation and quick action, but all who delight to wander alone in fields and on the open road will read it with peculiar relish. A spirit of adventure lies in its dreams and fancies, and although so little may be said actually to happen, a sense of happy expectancy runs through the pages. It is one of those books to turn to for relief from the hectic, jostling highway of modern fiction—even as one turns down a sequestered lane in search of shade.

POOLS OF THE PAST. By Charles Procter. 7s. 6d. net. (John Bale, Sons & Danielsson.)

Mr. Charles Procter puts a somewhat severe strain on our credulity by basing his plot on a melodramatic coincidence. David Armour, having sworn vengeance on the woman who, he believes, murdered his friend, discovers that woman to be the young and charming stepmother of the girl he loves! A sensational story centres round this astounding circumstance, which will be read with zest by those who covet thrills and heartrending suspense. Sybil, the wife, in an effort to hide her past from her husband, tries to ruin him that they may retire to obscurity; while he, for his part, is intent on making a fortune to lay it at her feet. The scheming and anguish of mind end, prosaically enough, in the police court; but the author is kind, and ingeniously unravels the tangled skein that hearts may be set free to find happiness.

NOBODY KNOWS. By Douglas Goldring. 7s. 6d. (Chapman and Hall.)

There is no need, in a novel, to deliver any message at all. You can simply tell a story. But here Mr. Goldring invites us to go great lengths, and to consider the puzzle of life itself. And he has no message. His own problems evidently remain unsolved. In post-war London, Gilbert Vayle, a journalist, finds it hard to get work. His wife, bored by him and by poverty, leaves him, and he drifts here and there, observing, listening, wondering. His thoughts travel back to his childhood, spent with middle-class Victorians living in a stuffy vicarage. Existence then had at least a system and a standard. What is there to take its place? Sex-talk, birth-control, sham science? It is an unhappy book, and even when Gilbert finds the woman he loves, they are restless. "Whether we are right or not, and what is going to happen to us—nobody knows." Our advice to the able author is not to touch this sort of story again. "Nobody Knows" is a dejected bit of writing.

EXPLORERS OF THE DAWN. By Mazo de la Roche. 6s. (Cassell.)

By a new author. The story of three little boys, who are left in the care of an unsympathetic, harsh governess for two years while their father is abroad. Their mother is dead, and Mrs. Handsomebody is no mother, just a mass of reproofs and punishments. They had rather a poor time of it, but their high spirits carried them through. "Angel, fiery, candid, inconstant, the careless possessor of a beautiful boy's treble; next, myself, a year younger, but equally tall and courageous in a more dogged way; then the Seraph, three years my junior. He was just five, following where we led with a blind loyalty. Stubborn, strong, and jolly as a pie." This tale of how the three pursued their own joyous private life will probably be enjoyed more by grown-ups than by kiddies, as it is written in a grown-up way, from a grown-up point of view. It will move hearts, for the boys are happy pickles.

THE ISLAND GOD FORGOT. By Charles B. Stilson and Charles Beahan. 7s. 6d. (Unwin.)

In the First Novel Library. A dramatic tale of a crew who discovered a scuttled ship in the hidden harbour of an uncharted island. There is a brisk account of a mutiny on board, also there is a hidden treasure chest, which eventually is brought on deck and proved to be a hoax. After this, one of the evil spirits on board has the ship blown up with a charge of melinite. Five castaways drift ashore on the island, and there, in a mouldering water bag, the treasure is found. On the island the skipper's daughter is born. They call her Memory. Memory's life is described in romantic colours, her upbringing among wild nature, her first love story. Decidedly a good yarn, with lots of stuff in it.

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SMOKELESS BURNING. By Constance I. Smith (Isabel Beaumont). 7s. 6d. net. (Melrose.)

Under the name of Isabel Beaumont, which apparently she is now discarding, Miss Constance I. Smith sprang into prominence not many months ago with her prize novel, "Secret Drama." The same vivid descriptions, the same close attention to detail in presenting persons and places mark this, her second book, as something unusual and almost painfully realistic. The two old sisters living on the Winchelsea marshes are characters that, with their tragic incompatability, their unconscious, gruesome humour, stand out with all the vividness of reality. The plot is slight; it is the characters that count—Freddie Seemur, so generously offering to house his aged aunts in his London home, yet with a subtle, mercenary motive; the younger aunt who hungers for the life and stir of the City; the older aunt stubbornly baulking her sister's dream, refusing to go. What a minute picture is drawn of the old women's cramped and narrow lives! "They washed up, arguing over the apportioning of the cleaning and drying, dragging the tea-cloth and the crockery from each other's hands, each doing again what the other had already done. . . ." A novel of altogether unusual interest and ability.

MR. BRADDY'S BOTTLE. By Richard Connell. 3s. 6d. net. (Chapman & Dodd.)

American magazine stories have a way of trickling on and on so interminably that the English reader is often forced to turn for relief to the ever-present advertising matter in the adjoining columns (as doubtless the editor intends him to do). It is therefore a pleasure to record that the laughable extravaganzas in this volume of stories by a new American humorist achieve their end crisply and brightly, and with no ulterior advertising motive. Mr. Connell's heroes are of the kind one readily sympathises with. They belong to the meek, downtrodden, chinless species, who for want of that indispensable something called "pep" are in danger of missing their share of this world's big salaries and brave adventures. The finding of a bottle of forbidden liquor in the cellar of his new home is the means of giving the steady-going, unenterprising Mr. Braddy *his* share. With young Croly Addick the process is more painful. Croly is bullied by everybody until by a lucky accident his receding chin is smashed, necessitating a new one being built-on at the hospital. The new jaw protrudes like the prow of a battleship, and armed with this, Croly finds his path roses, roses—or in the American equivalent, dollars, dollars—all the way. Altogether a decidedly amusing book for a frivolous evening.

The Bookman's Table.

A SON OF THE MIDDLE BORDER. By Hamlin Garland. 7s. 6d. (John Lane.)

Mr. Hamlin Garland, one of the truest and strongest of Western novelists, has spent nearly a year in England, and revelled in the fresh understanding it has given him of British nature and British problems. Those of us who know his books—"Her Mountain Lover" and the rest—are well aware of his sincerity of touch in writing and the effective humour he can put into the clash of character and type. Few up-to-date Western writers possess such real affinity with the Old World, and this gives him spiritual kinship with men of the past like Longfellow, Lowell and Howells—men who began by absorbing the best that America and her universities could give, and then completed their development by acquiring the best they could find in the travel and literature of Europe. It is one of the highest ambitions surely for an observer and interpreter to strengthen the bridge of sympathy that has for so long stretched across the Atlantic and has been for ever hallowed by joint service in the war. Mr. Garland is destined to be one of these, and we are glad of this biograph of a family to show what like of men he springs from. There is something of heroism in the drift of his father westward and ever westward in search of the unfailing crop and the kindly season; but it melts to pathos when the author has to follow westward and woo the old and disillusioned farmer back to the haunts of his boyhood, and persuade him that the West has been a cruel lure. Social conditions, especially after the civil war time, were harsh and inclement, but the native beauty of character and custom, the old-fashioned pieties and traditions, blend everything together into a texture of patience and content. The closing scenes where the kinsmen come together at a Thanksgiving feast are like a perfect sunset of human life.

A CHOICE OF THE BEST POEMS FOR THE YOUNG. Compiled by Roger Ingpen. (Selwyn & Blount.)

Mr. Roger Ingpen's new anthology, "A Choice of the Best Poems for the Young," is published in a handy, pocket-sized edition. It is always tempting to suggest poems that might have been included and poems that might have been left out when writing about anthologies, but in this case Mr. Ingpen has disarmed us by using the word "choice" in his title. The range of the book is wide, and includes all kinds of poets and poems, though the only living poet appearing in its pages is Mr. Walter de la Mare. Among the other poets are Shakespeare, Burns, Leigh Hunt, Keats, Tennyson, Longfellow, Shelley, Blake, Browning, Wordsworth, Herrick and many others.

HISTORY OF CLAN MACFARLANE. By James MacFarlane. 6s. 6d. (Glasgow: Clark.)

The history of any of the great Highland clans usually touches general history at various points, and the present narrative, besides possessing an interest for the MacFarlanes and for the several families which, although bearing different names, are allied to the clan, as "septs," is a series of records of battles and adventures of many kinds, some of them of historical and antiquarian value. The book is well illustrated with pictures of scenes, documents, clan tartans and other subjects connected with the MacFarlane history. There is even a reproduction of the words and music of the clan pibroch, "Thogail nam Bò Theid Sinn," so that we get the impression of a very complete register of one of the most famous of the fighting clans. Many of the members of the clan have written their names large not only in political annals, but in science and industry, and the book is therefore a record of wide and varied interest.

THE HISTORY OF GREENOCK. By Robert Murray Smith. 21s. (Orr, Pollock.)

Mr. Murray Smith, a well-known West of Scotland journalist, has written an admirable account of the town with which he has been connected for many years:

> "The Grey Town
> That pipes the morning up before the lark
> With shrieking steam, and from a hundred stalks
> Lacquers the sooty sky."

So John Davidson besang the beloved Greenock where his early life was spent. Greenock's potentialities were obvious, and its future was certain. From small beginnings it has risen to renown and populousness, and is the seventh town in Scotland in respect of size. Situated at the mouth of one of the world's busiest waterways, and with abundant natural features to justify its existence as a seaport, Greenock could hardly fail to achieve the prosperity which has come to it within the last hundred years. A fascinating hive of industry—as befits the birthplace of James Watt, pioneer of the age of steam—it is one of Britain's principal shipbuilding centres; it has the largest sugar refineries in the Kingdom; and an array

of chemical works adds to the wealth, if it does not improve the amenity of the place. Greenock has some claim to literary celebrity. John Galt, author of "Annals of the Parish," that earliest example of the "Kailyard" type of literature, spent his boyhood here, and to Greenock he returned to close his weary days when his Canadian adventures were over. Dr. Melville M'Culloch, compiler of a many-editioned school classic—the "Course of Reading"—ministered in a Greenock parish for forty years. That noble pair of Hegelians, John and Edward Caird—Principal of Glasgow University and Master of Balliol—were sons of Greenock. John Wilson (another than "crusty Christopher" North) who wrote "Clyde: a Poem" (almost forgotten now) was rector of the Grammar School of Greenock. Greatest of Greenock's memories is its association with Burns's Highland Mary, whose dust reposed in the Old West burying-ground from 1786 to 1920, when shipyard extension schemes forced a resurrection and a re-interment in the Town Cemetery. Greenock's ecclesiastical annals have their due interest, but the industrial fortunes of the place are after all the real sources of Greenock's reputation throughout the globe. Mr. Smith's book is a faithful and painstaking chronicle, and is likely to remain a standard work on the subject. Illustrations are curiously and provokingly absent. No local history ought ever to neglect these, and if another edition is called for, at least half a dozen good pictures should be added.

Music.

ARTHUR BLISS.

BY WATSON LYLE.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Arthur Bliss.**

THERE is, about the personality of Arthur Bliss, a frank geniality that is irresistible and that would compel attention anywhere. Indeed, a few years ago, before I was aware of the composer's identity, his face invariably attracted me when I saw him in concert halls. I was, at that time, becoming acquainted with his remarkably original music. Closer acquaintance with him impresses one with his strongly individual outlook upon musical art, with the freshness of his ideas and, incidentally, with his vitality and reserve of nervous energy.

Yet, withal, I do not think I should regard Bliss as an egotist. He is much too intelligent to brush aside the opinions and experiences of others as being unworthy of attention. Only the fool goes through life wearing the *yashmak* of complacent self-satisfaction. On the other hand there is no unhealthy introspection in the personality of Bliss: nothing to undermine that confidence which is necessary to impart conviction to creative art. He writes sincerely, as he feels and hears.

When I expressed admiration for the highly realistic tone-colour employed in the overture of the incidental music that he wrote for "The Tempest," in connection

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with Viola Tree's production at the Aldwych in January, 1921, he replied simply that he wrote down sounds as he heard them. His technique is employed as a means to an end, like that of any good artist. It is this that lifts his work above the music made by some contemporary composers who juggle with modern harmony, vacillating rhythms and weird instrumental combinations in the hope that something "original" will result. Chicanery of this kind is responsible for the disfavour with which many people regard music described, loosely, as "modern" in idiom.

The sensitive aural appreciation of Bliss gives an unusual vividness to his tone-pictures He presents to the listener a composite picture, in which the details of the distinct sounds that go to form it are not completely lost in obtaining the general effect. By way of analogy in pictorial art, it might be said that his work often reminds one of a forceful line drawing.

The varied music and sounds of the country-side, as well as other sounds that have a mechanical (machinery) or human origin, the composer transmutes into terms of music, generally with startling fidelity; and he adopts pretty direct media for the expression of his ideas. Thus, in the overture referred to above, he employs tenor and bass voices, trumpet, trombone, four tympani, side drum, tenor drum, bass drum, gong and pianoforte in drawing the picture of his "tempest." Imaginatively one hears, in addition to the gale and the rain, human voices in distress. There is an emotional impression of the feelings of awe which such upheavals of nature are apt to engender. Apart from the skilful use made of the drums and gong, there is of course nothing particularly original about using instruments of this class to obtain such an effect; but the inclusion of the human voices, the piano and even of the brass (trumpet and trombone) in the instrumentation is a stroke of genius.

We have all, I suppose, at some time or other, endured a "storm" at an organ recital. Bliss's "Tempest" music is as far removed from such travesties of natural phenomena as though it were what our American cousins style "the reel thing." Bliss is, in fact, rather fond of using the human voice as an instrument in his orchestral ensemble instead of in the orthodox manner of a vocal solo supported by orchestra.

His "Rhapsody" and "Rout" provide further, and dissimilar, examples of this use of the voice. The former work is quiet and reflective in mood. Its emotional impression is distinctly idyllic. The two voices (soprano and tenor) sing the melodies allotted to them on the open sound "Ah" throughout. In some such way might we hear, borne upon the breeze, the scarcely conscious singing of two happy human beings as they wandered across the fresh open uplands. "Rhapsody" is a very beautiful work.

The instrumentation of "Rout" is more elaborate than that of "Rhapsody." The voice has a melody given to it, and to this is set a "string of syllables corresponding to the scraps of song that would reach a listener watching a carnival from an open window"—I quote from the composer's brief literary preface to the work. The effect is therefore better for the tone-picture that he desires to convey to his hearers—i.e. the confused sounds of a "rout" or revel, heard from a slight distance—than if he had given intelligible words to the vocalist. These must inevitably have suggested associations foreign to his sound-picture. Further, that the the listener should only hear detached syllables would be truer to the circumstances of his position.

The work with which Bliss made his debut as a composer is entitled "Madam Noy." It bears the date 1918, and is frequently heard at vocal recitals in the arrangement for voice and piano, which, if I remember rightly, the composer used at its first London performance. The music of "Madam Noy" is in complete sympathy with the fantastic mood of the words. They tell of the midnight prowls of this witch, who digs up a bone from the sands of the seashore for use in an incantation. Locking the bone safely in a cupboard, the witch retires for the night; but a sepulchral voice, from inside the cupboard, insistently demands the return of the bone. She jumps out of bed, unlocks the cupboard and hurls "the talkative bone outside." Then ". . . she curses her luck and the bone in despair, But beneath comes a low, mocking laugh on the air." The wood-wind (flute, clarinet and bassoon) begin the music with a descending, chromatic scale passage, largely used throughout, which is aptly suggestive of the "low, mocking laugh." Harp, viola and double-bass are employed to sound the magic hour of twelve, midnight, when "she has gone to bed." The mystical effect is intensified by the addition of the flute, *pp*. There is nothing unhealthy in the composer's treatment of this grisly subject. He evades the tawdriness which, artistically, disfigures Saint-Saëns' musical allusions of a similar kind in his symphonic poem, "Danse Macabre."

There are five short pieces—"The Committee Meeting," "In the Wood," "In the Ball-room," "Soliloquy" and "In the Tube at Oxford Circus" in the book entitled "Conversations," for flute (or bass flute), oboe (or cor anglais), violin, viola and violoncello. In the first of these pieces a three-bar phrase reiterated ceaselessly by the violin *mf* against the varied material *ff* which the flute, oboe, viola and 'cello play, apparently satirises a tenacious individual in the meeting, or else, perhaps, the reminders of the chairman. No. 2 is an exquisite trifle, idyllic in mood. No. 3 begins vivaciously, but somehow the energy peters out, perhaps to typify the ennui stealing over the dancers. No. 4 is for cor anglais alone, and is calculated to absorb the attention of a performer upon that somewhat uncertainly responsive instrument. The conversations "In the Tube at Oxford Circus" are frequently interrupted by trills, and jarring noises, and rude interpolations of rhythms alien to the prevailing one of 4/4.

Rhythmic independence is characteristic of Bliss's music, and it finds a very complete exercise in the "Mêlée Fantasque," a brilliant piece of writing for full orchestra that might be likened to an elaborate embroidery in brightly and distinctively-hued materials, each gaily-coloured thread tracing a clear-cut pattern, that becomes an integral part of the whole. The work comes to an elegiac conclusion, and is dedicated to the memory of the late Claud Lovat Fraser.

Rhythmic vigour is very noticeable in the Concerto for pianoforte and tenor voice, accompanied by strings and percussion. In this work the voice,

although used instrumentally, is given words to sing. These have been chosen for their phonetic qualities rather than for their meaning, their *raison d'être* being simply that the *timbre* of the voice is best heard when it is given consonants as well as vowels to sing. A xylophone is another novel addition to the scoring.

In his most important work, " A Colour Symphony," he is somewhat concerned with the colour-associations symbolised (in himself) by the sounds and rhythms of music. The idea, while not new (Scriabin, for example, having advised the use of a keyboard of light for the complete performance of his " Prometheus "), is very controversial, and there is no special reason why it should be gone into here. Pressure upon space also, I fear, compels me to a bare statement of the fact that the Symphony is in Four Movements which are, consecutively, headed " Purple : the colour of Amethysts, Pageantry, Royalty and Death " ; " Red : the colour of Rubies, Wine, Revelry, Furnaces, Courage and Magic " ; " Blue : the colour of Sapphires, Deep Water, Loyalty and Melancholy " ; and " Green : the colour of Emeralds, Hope, Joy, Youth, Spring and Victory." The work will be heard for the second time in Queen's Hall on March 10th, and Messrs. Goodwin & Tabb publish a monograph upon it by Percy A. Scholes.

Bliss leaves this country for New York, thence for California, on April 21st. It appears probable that he will employ his especial gifts in the direction of colour and rhythm in the composition of music for super-cinema productions, with which infant art he finds himself in much sympathy.

In the matter of biographical data it may be stated that Arthur Bliss was born in London on August 2nd, 1891. He was educated at Rugby and Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he took his B.A. and Mus.Bac. in 1913. He served in France with the 13th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers and with the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards. He was wounded on the Somme, and mentioned in dispatches for gallantry in 1916, and he was gassed near Cambrai in 1918.

The works he is at present engaged upon include a Concerto for Oboe, and a Ballet, " The Mask of the Red Death," after Edgar Allan Poe.

Such, then, is a brief consideration of the personality and work of a composer whose influence upon the progress of musical art may be far reaching.

LIST OF COMPOSITIONS.

" Madam Noy " (1918). Song, for soprano and six instruments. Words by " E. H. W. M." (Chester.)

Rhapsody (1919). Soprano and tenor voices. (Carnegie Trust, 1921 ; Stainer & Bell.)

" Rout " (1920). Soprano and Chamber Orchestra. (Goodwin & Tabb ; also on " H.M.V." Records.)

" Conversations " (1920). For Violin, Viola, 'Cello, Flute (or Bass Flute), Oboe and Cor Anglais. (Goodwin & Tabb.)

Music to " The Tempest," produced by Viola Tree at the Aldwych Theatre, January, 1921.

Concerto (1920). For pianoforte and tenor voice, accompanied by strings and percussion, and xylophone.

Two Studies for Orchestra (1920).

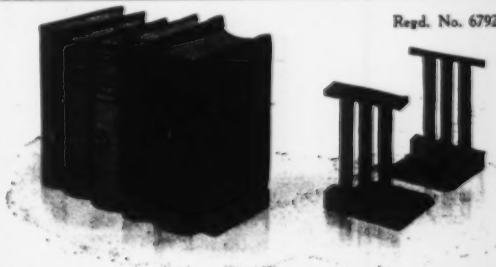
" Mêlée Fantasque for Orchestra " (1921). (Goodwin & Tabb).

Two Nursery Rhymes. Words by Frances Cornford (1920). (Chester.)

" Three Romantic Songs " (1922). Words by Walter de la Mare. (Goodwin & Tabb.)

" A Colour Symphony." For Orchestra (1922).

" Bliss." A One-Step, for pianoforte (1923). (Goodwin & Tabb.)



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DITTIES GRAVE AND GAY.*

It has long while been customary—in fact, I do not remember a time when the vogue was unknown—to peform concert songs in couples. The unwritten law which ordains this custom is based, it would seem, upon some sort of theory: e.g. that the more solemn song of the two requires something approximate to "comic relief" in a tragedy, lest the hearers become unduly and permanently depressed. Or, again, that the more vivacious of the two needs to be kept in check, and its frivolity subdued, by the chastening presence of a "dark companion," such as many bright stars possess. At any rate, though at times the inevitability of this tandem treatment may become slightly wearisome, one admits that there must be some basic reasonableness demanding it—something subtler than mere love of variety, and deeper than the vocalist's quite natural ambition to succeed in two opposite styles.

What this something is, one can only conjecture. Certainly, it has not always carried weight: it is a belated reaction, I believe, against the excessive and portentous seriosity of our remote ancestors. A marked preference for the extremely lugubrious was shown by our Elizabethan forbears: whether they were writing song-words or song-melodies. When not actively employed "in Ercles' vein," tearing a passion to tatters, the sixteenth century musician not seldom took his pleasures sadly. Violent emotions, of course, gave him and his vocalist more scope for expression: and the overwhelming agonies of unrequited love furnished the staple food of his art. These were more solidly doleful stuff than those airy whimsies and caprices which the lyric-writing fraternity, that "nest of singing-birds," twittered with such exquisite charm. And I suppose that is why we do not come across many contemporary settings of the Shakespearean lyrics—those iridescent bubbles of grace and fancy. They are the very breath of *joie de vivre*—mere lightly-warbled snatches, like a willow-wren's on a flowering spray; and possibly they rather bewildered the Tudor composers, who were "most musical, most melancholy" in a very literal sense. You cannot conceive, for example, of Dowland achieving anything akin to Schubert's rendering of "Hark, Hark, the Lark." But his sober, sombre, stately style is admirably exhibited in such instances as "From Silent Night," whose prevailing tone is truly self-stated as "tunes of sad despair"—of "sorrow, grief, and care." A beautiful piece of work: yet so dismal as to demand an immediate subsequent allegro movement, to take off the taste of woe. This allegro could be adequately supplied by "Rybbesdale," which is sufficiently old-world in words and treatment to follow well after Dowland. Mr. Balfour Gardiner has here created a composition of pleasantly quaint charm and freshness. I hardly think, however, that the last four bars are as effective a conclusion as they might be; and, were I the vocalist, I might be tempted to take the liberty of shaping them to finer issues. But let this be breathed *sub rosa*.

In his two settings of Stevenson poems, Roger Quilter provides grave and gay respectively, to what should be everybody's liking. "In the Highlands," while not of special distinction, has a peaceful attractiveness of its own, realising and reflecting the well-known verses. Here again, I do not regard the finale as quite expressive of what one might have expected to hear. But this is no doubt a personal matter, for one cannot lay any charge of neglect against so thoughtful and artistic a composer as Roger Quilter. His spring melody, "Over the Land is April," makes a sparkling pendant to the quieter song; it exhales the actual atmosphere of green moss, primroses, young leaves, growing grasses. Both these productions are written fluently for the voice, and skilfully for the accompanist.

Sir Landon Ronald's "At Night" bears a singular resemblance in subject and in feeling to a song of much beauty which appeared some while back—S. J. Rowton's "Night, and the Woods, and You" (words by Rupert Brooke)—yet the treatment is wholly dissimilar. It is as though two men had been regarding the same idea through different-coloured glasses. "At Night" is a distinguished and musicianly piece, whose pensive sweetness should commend it to all vocalists capable of its appreciation and interpretation. That is to say, to every proficient tenor or soprano. . . . I wonder why "its" is spelt rightly once, and wrongly thrice?

Brisk and lively, "The Bachelor" is a bright little morsel, eminently suitable for an encore song, or to follow after more meditative pages. The fifteenth-century lyric is both humorous and veracious in its description of the unattached young man—showing that human nature never changes! Altogether it is a jolly little affair. "O Mistress Mine"—definitely intended for the same purpose (as an encore)—does not seem to me so taking as "When that I was and a tiny little Boy" (lately reviewed), by the same composer. 'Twill serve: it is tuneful, but shallow, and a trifle conventional. Perhaps one's palate is jaded after meeting so very, very many cases of these lines, "with apt notes to sing them withal." Did ever a single one of them, these settings of "O Mistress Mine," appeal to one as being exactly right?

And now to close upon a gravely tender note, in Cyril Scott's lovely "Reconciliation." I grow chary of reiterating encomiums on this master's work—so often and so warmly have I eulogised him. "Reconciliation" is of a touching and passionate simplicity: if I refrain from enthusiasm over it, it is only lest my readers should be fatigued with praises of Cyril Scott. But his music is, I think, in a state of perpetual progression from strength to strength; and, grave or gay, such ditties are equally desirable to lovers of a sincere and noble art.

MAY BYRON.

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"POLLY" AT KINGSWAY THEATRE.

"Polly" suffers from the disadvantage that her audiences make comparisons. The play being announced as a sequel to the "Beggar's Opera," and human nature being what it is, we are ready to note differences from the older piece and, like children insisting on the old tale being told precisely in the old way, to consider them incontinently as defects. It may be admitted at once that Macheath and his crew have suffered an extreme sea change in transportation to Jamaica, and that "Polly" has more points of difference than of resemblance to the "Beggar's Opera." The flavour is different. There is less satire and wit. For satiric burlesque we now have burlesque-romantic musical comedy. But what music, what a garland of adorable tunes! Mr. Austin has been even cleverer than before; Mr. Bax's adaptation is dexterous and in period, and Mr. Wilkinson's scenery is admirable.

The style of the two principals contributes to the change. I liked Mr. Chatham's work greatly; but anything more different from the delicious absurdity of Mr. Ranalow, who always reminds me of a charming stockbroker being naughty on vacation, can hardly be imagined. Macheath of Jamaica is a very chastened edition of Macheath, the bad lad of Newgate. One foresees for him a romantically melancholic middle age of strict monogamy. Miss Peachum too has changed. From a pet she has developed into a woman. Miss Lilian Davies has beauty, grace, good diction and sincerity. She sings the loveliest tunes in the score with a voice that is worthy of them. Between a first and second hearing it had markedly improved and will be still better if she can make the middle register as

steady as the extremes. The producers are lucky in their cast. Every member can sing, act, and articulate the English language—a happy sign of the times. Mr. Percy Parsons is still a joy as the absurdly benevolent pirate, vast of voice and light of foot. The two new principals are also a success. As Mrs. Trapes Miss Gladys Sinclair looks and acts like a bridling dame drawn by Cruikshank. Mr. Stanley Vilven, the new Mr. Ducat, can act burlesque, dance, sing a sturdy tenor and suggest salaciousness without offence.

In three things "Polly" seems to me certainly better than the "Beggar's Opera." It is shorter and more varied, and, having no too-gross Mrs. Peachum to introduce the fœtor of unpleasant reality, is more purely fantastic. Altogether I look forward to seeing it a third time. It deserves to live as long as the Hammersmith piece. If it does not it will be because the music is too good for a mere West End audience, which comes late and babbles through the charming overtures; because Macheath has become sober; and still more because West End expenses and the particular theatre deprive the play of that finest of all publicity agents, the gallery. I wish "Polly" lived in Hammersmith, or the Euston Road. Had she set up house in a galleried theatre so inaccessible as to raise the fighting spirit of music-lovers, I should have no doubts.

RODNEY BENNETT.

NOTES ON NEW MUSIC.

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Young pianists should gain much pleasure and instruction from these cleverly set duets. All the tunes are founded on British Nursery Songs.

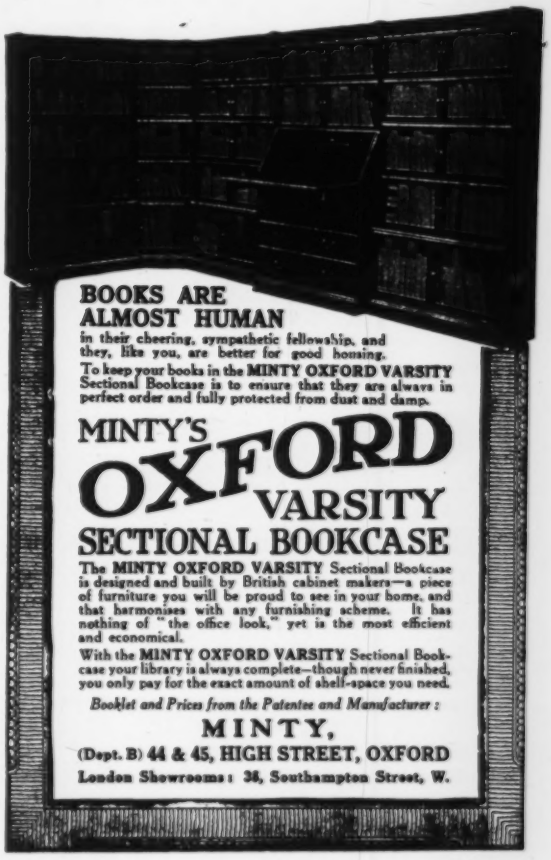
PLAYTIME PIECES. By Ernest Austin. (Larway.)

Mr. Ernest Austin is certainly a power to be reckoned with when considering the modern child's musical education. He has the great advantage of being able to express himself equally well through the written word and through music: he is full of ideas, which, in "Playtime Pieces," he presents through both mediums. The sub-title, "The Poetry of Rhythm" (Music Appreciation Series), gives some idea of his main theme. The reading matter in the book is delightful; entertaining, amusing, fascinating, yet full of instruction; and the music in the book has exactly the same qualities as the reading matter. It makes one pity the children of the past who had not the opportunity of learning music the Ernest Austin way.

The Drama.

IF WINTER COMES.

So many people had said it was impossible to dramatise "If Winter Comes," and so many who had seen early performances at the provincial theatre had spoken of things in the story omitted from the dramatised version, that when the play came to London I went to see it at the St. James's with certain, or uncertain, apprehensions. But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Mrs. KATHLEEN RICE,
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Harpenden,

to whom, in consequence, the prize is now awarded. The winning article appeared in the "DAILY MIRROR" of January 4th. The Directors are privileged to add that, in the opinion of the Examiner, the articles submitted attained a high standard of excellence. They would mention that all students are eligible for this competition. For Prospectus and particulars of the School's Courses apply to:—

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Sabre returns from the War on leave.

Mabel interrupts the breakfast party at Tidborough.

Miss Helen Spencer as Effie Bright;
Mr. Owen Nares as Mark Sabre;
Miss Grace Lane as Mrs. Sabre;
Miss Margaret Reeve and
Miss Iris Vandeleur
as High Jinks and Low Jinks.

Scenes from "If Winter Comes."
By A. S. M. Hutchinson and
Macdonald Hastings,
at the St. James's Theatre.

MARK SABRE: "THIS IS MY DETERMINATION. EFFIE MUST REMAIN HERE."

LADY TYBAR: "MY HUSBAND IS DEAD."

Lady Tybar confronts Fortune and Twyning in their office. They hint that she has not power to refuse a renewal of their lease, but she informs them that Lord Tybar is dead.

Mr. Tarver Penne as Twyning; Mr. Frederick Volpé as the Rev. Sebastian Fortune; and Miss Barbara Hoffe as Lady Tybar.

Photos by W. S. Campbell.

soon after the curtain went up I began to suspect that they were groundless, and before it went down on the last scene I knew they were. In collaboration with Mr. Macdonald Hastings, Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson has transformed his famous novel into an acting drama without losing anything of the poignance and charm of the narrative. Of course no book that keeps a reader occupied for a day could be adapted to the three hours' traffic of the stage without compressions of dialogue and readjustments of incident, but all such accommodations have been made so deftly that the whole story in all essential detail is unfolded before the footlights.

The Mark Sabre of Mr. Owen Nares is Mr. Hutchinson's Mark Sabre incarnate. From the moment he arrives on the inevitable bicycle he is the Mark of the novel made manifest. It is the very man—the impetuous idealist, the chivalrous fool, with all his lovable, irritating little habits, his odd sense of humour, his irresolutions, his courage and dogged strength of will when he sees what he feels is the right thing to do. Mr. Nares makes him a finely high-minded but intensely and entirely human creature, so that you can believe in his idealistic love of Lady Tybar and in the reckless championship of the forlorn Effie that alienates his wife and brings ruin and disgrace on himself. The thing is done, too, without heroics, with a simple naturalness; the jerky mannerisms, the casual jests, the swift self-communings are all touched in quietly, with no undue emphasis, and it is this very quietness and unheroic doing of heroic things that intensifies the pathos and power of the drama's most poignant scenes. As I overheard one of the audience remark, Owen Nares acts the part so perfectly that he does not seem to be acting. It proves him, to the surprise of some critics, one of the subtlest and greatest character-actors on the modern stage.

The difficult part of the unimaginative, unsympathetic, suburban-minded wife is very ably taken by Miss Grace Lane; and Miss Helen Spencer gives just the right suggestions of raw innocence, crude youthfulness and ultimate pitifulness to her presentation of Effie Bright. Miss Barbara Hoffe as Lady Tybar, Mr. Ernest Mainwaring as Major Millet, Mr. Tarver Penna as Mr. Twyning, and Mr. Frederick Volpé as the unctuous, obese, slightly pompous Rev. Sebastian Fortune are admirable. I have seldom seen a novel so ably transferred to the stage, or furnished with a cast that more adequately realised its characters, from the chief to the least of them. The story is as interesting on the boards as in the book; so the play ought to be as successful as the novel, and looks as if it would be.

A. R.

TREASURE ISLAND. At the Strand Theatre.

Probably no lover of Stevenson will be wholly satisfied with the stage rendering of "Treasure Island." There is of necessity so much of the story omitted, and the dialogue does not give any idea of the fine writing which goes to the making of the book. Nevertheless, this is not to say that it is not an excellent play. The first act, in particular, has caught the true spirit of romance, and the scene in "The Admiral Benbow" thrills us with the keenest excitement. Perhaps as the play goes on we get a little satiated with fights and pistol-shots and cold-blooded killing, though the acting throughout is remarkably good. Mr. Arthur Bourchier puts a lot of first-rate work into the part of Long John Silver, while Mr. Frederick Peisley makes a very convincing Jim Hawkins. This young actor, with his restraint and absolute naturalness, gives promise of big things in the future. From first to last the play is, as one would expect, mainly a play for boys; there is only one woman in it—the mother, played by Miss Beatrice Wilson—and she does not appear after the first act! But all who have not quite lost the enthusiasm of youth will enjoy it, will glory in the sheer adventure of the thing, and the riotous colour-effects of the setting. The scenes on "The Hispaniola" are especially beautiful and realistic.

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